1917

Contributions by **Gina Palerme, Horatio Bottomley, "Taffrail," etc.**

The May ROYAL

7D NET

801289

YOU CAN SEND THIS MAGAZINE POST FREE TO THE TROOPS.

See page 46.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Her charm

Beecham's Pills.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
801289
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1917 L

Photo *Bertram Park.*

Miss Violet Norton, who appears in *Vanity Fair* at the Palace Theatre, is one of the revue chorus girls to whom we dedicate an article entitled "The Backbone of Revue." You will find it on page 3, where some of the loveliest faces in London are immortalised for your benefit!

Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Photo *Bertram Park.*

Miss Irene Russell, one of the fairest flowers in the wonderful "garden of girls" who helped to make *Pell-Mell* such a success at the Ambassador's Theatre.

Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Backbone of Revue

Photo Bertram Park.

The chorus of *Houp-la* at the St. Martin's Theatre was notable for its pretty girls, of whom Miss Pepita Bobadilla was one of the most charming.

By Margaret Chute.

"Lamb without mint sauce, champagne without bubbles, oysters without vinegar—as bad, or worse, wou'd be revue without the chorus." So says the author of the following article, which contains a well-deserved tribute to the part played by the Beauty Chorus in lifting revue to the pinnacle of success it has now attained.

Wars may come, and wars may go—but revues go on for ever.

In fact, the nimble revue appears to be the staple theatrical diet of war-time. If not actually *the* most paying form of dramatic entertainment, it is certainly well in the front rank. In fact, the most successful revue of recent memory—the ever-acceptable *Bing Boys*—was the subject of an interesting financial statement by Mr. Oswald Stoll quite recently. It transpires that during the phenomenally successful ten months' run of this show at the Alhambra, entertainment tax amounting altogether to several thousand pounds was paid. After that, who will dare deny that revue is a favourite war-time amusement?

One wonders, quietly, how many theatres providing an ordinary dramatic menu can show a similar result on the takings of ten months.

Be that as it may, revue has arrived in England, and after a certain amount of success in pre-war days has jumped into triumphant, unassailable prosperity and popularity through the emphatic vote cast in its favour by the fighting forces of the nation.

What is it that makes the weird and wonderful mixture of songs, jokes, and gags known as revue so amazingly popular? Briefly, what is the backbone of revue?

The answer is—the chorus.

Take away the chorus and show-girls from revue and what remains? A jingling bag of dry bones, rattling against each other, without a backbone to support the entire structure and give life and energy to the "ribs"—in other words, the principals, whose efforts, however skilful, lose half their effect without the "binding-together" received from that rock of revue—the chorus.

Yes; the chorus is indeed the backbone of revue.

Have you ever contemplated sitting through a revue minus a Beauty Chorus? No matter if the leading lady is lovely, no matter if the principal comedian has got Charlie Chaplin fried to a frazzle, no matter if the scenery is too gorgeous for words—if there is no chorus the piquancy of the whole thing has gone.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Miss Valerie May won all hearts in *Houp la*, the revue which——

——was also adorned by Miss Mollie Ramsden——

Photos, Bertram Park.

——and gave Miss Elizabeth Beerbohm a chance of adding to her laurels.

Just picture it—no little girl in the corner, looking equally ripping as a chauffeuse, a lobster, a society belle, or a window-cleaner. No hustling bunch of beauties, with laughing eyes and twinkling toes, to perform amazingly complicated evolutions and warble refrains in voices small but sweet.

Well, the result *might* be a revue, but it would be a case of making a spice cake and leaving out the spice. Lamb without mint sauce, champagne without bubbles, oysters without vinegar—as bad, or worse, would be revue without the chorus.

Where they find them heaven only knows! All these pretty, lively, dainty girls, hundreds upon hundreds of them, are surely produced by the waving of a magician's wand. There must be, without exaggeration, *thousands* of show girls and chorus girls appearing in revue in England to-night. And yet the supply is apparently inexhaustible.

Consider this true story: A certain manager advertised for chorus girls for a revue. He wanted 50. To the trial over 400 eager applicants turned up, and due selection was made. Three weeks later he decided to send a revue on tour, and advertised again, stating that no girls who attended the last trial need apply. This time he wanted 30 girls—and 600 arrived to be chosen! This means that one manager within a month had 1,000 would-be chorus girls passing through his hands! Of course, only a very small percentage were in any way suitable, but the fact remains, nevertheless, that they all applied!

In these manless days, when men who once sang in a revue chorus are now handling guns or bombs in some Flanders trench, there is a greater demand than ever for the girls who comprise the backbone of revue. It is a fact for rejoicing that comparatively few managers are dressing chorus girls in trousers or putting them into short-haired wigs in imitation of the vanished chorus man. For managers, being exceedingly astute gentlemen, realise that the chief charm of the revue chorus lies in the fact that it wears petticoats. Put it into trousers and half the attraction is gone!

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Palace is famous for its pretty girls. Miss Heather Featherstone appears there in *Vanity Fair*, while——

——Miss Daisy Waller added lustre to *Bric-à-Brac*.

So in place of 30 girls and a dozen men, as in other days, we now get 50 or more girls—*as* girls. And very delightful they are!

The following story, apropos of the fact that so many girls have left other professions in order to be munition-makers or work in other ways under the Government, is given for what it is worth, but it is not advanced as the personal opinion of the Editor of the ROYAL, or the writer of this article. It might perhaps be supposed that theatrical work is not exactly necessary to the welfare of the nation at the moment, but such is not the opinion of many people, including no less a keen thinker than Lord Derby, who has stated publicly that the task of amusing fighting-men and keeping up the spirits of the general public is one which is of vast importance and value.

Here, then, is the story:

A certain very pretty and popular member of the chorus of a West-end revue received the following letter from a soldier in

Photos *Bertram Park.*

Miss Evelyn Laurie is another Palace beauty who contributes to the success of *Vanity Fair*.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

France: "The papers to-day have given us cold feet out here—quite apart from the damp in the trenches. All this talk about girls going on the land and working at this, that, and the other—well, it's scared us, I can tell you. Where

Miss Bill Bailey, who graces the chorus of *The Bing Girls* at the Alhambra, which—

—also includes Miss M. Venelle among its collection of youth and beauty.

Photos Hana.

are the girls coming from? Does it mean that all the ripping girls who have danced and sung and smiled and made us forget the war behind the footlights for a while, will chuck up their jobs and go off?

"Don't do it! We value the work you are doing too much for that. It would be just unthinkable to come home on leave and find no revues and no chorus to buck us up. It's half the joy of coming back to know that the sight of pretty frocks and pretty faces will help to wipe out the memory of things we've been seeing—not pretty sights at all, I can tell you!

"We can't do without you, and revue can't do without you either. So if you go revues will go, and we can't spare you, believe me. The job you are doing just now is really a national job; so stick to it, and make a few odd thousand fighting-men forget there's a war on till they get outside the theatre and see the evening papers on sale. So long, old thing, and let us find you still behind the footlights when we come home again!"

Revue came to England *via* Paris, the home of revue. And it is now drifting back—after a spasm of Americanisation—to the French form, for one of London's latest revues, *Zig-Zag*, at the Hippodrome, is adapted from the French.

Our chorus and show girls are quite different in type and style to the French revue girl. Young and fresh, both on and off the stage, the average revue chorus presents a picture of English beauty that makes one wonder where so many lovely girls are found. It is said that one revue manager—clever man!—goes round English villages and finds real roses-and-cream girls, fresh as morning dew! Another manager is said to employ agents who travel the world over seeking really pretty girls—*not* as principals, but to form the backbone of the show!

As a stepping stone to marriage the chorus of revue is becoming even

Photo Bertram Park.

Miss Billie Barclay, one of the many pretty chorus girls in *See-Saw* at the Comedy.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

more famous than the chorus of the Gaiety—the place where peeresses were made. There is a certain intimacy between audience and players in Revueland that leads to many friendships, ending at the altar. When a man sits in a stall and a girl stands on a gang-plank within a few inches of him it is scarcely surprising that smiles are exchanged!

And there is the true story of the man who got married very suddenly, and to the great surprise of his friends, as he had always been regarded as a permanent bachelor. One of his oldest pals came to congratulate him.

"Tons of good wishes, old thing, and so on! Your wife's simply topping—the prettiest girl I've seen for ages. Where did you meet her?"

"On the gang-plank at the Paloceum during the run of *Chase Me, Girls!*" replied the newly-married man. "She was one of the snowball girls, and you know how they used to pelt the stalls with snowballs? Well, one night she struck me full in the face—pretty good shot—and gave me a black eye! After that, of course, she simply *had* to marry me. I insisted—as compensation, you know!"

Photo *Hugh Cecil.*

A sprightly member of the Hippodrome chorus is Miss Molly Munroe, who with——

Photo *Elvin Neame.*

——Miss Lena Blades contributes to the attractions of *Zig-Zag*.

Some of the "backbone" girls are tall and haughty, some are *petite* and slight—all are charming. Revues will always be associated with war days as the chief theatrical attractions of a time of stress and struggle—and remarkable for that, if for nothing else. And the "backbone" of revue, when credit is paid, will deserve the very best that can be said of it.

It is not always easy to keep smiling and gay in these days, and chorus girls, like the rest of us, have their menfolk at the Front, and are beset by anxiety on their account. And yet they must always be bright and sparkling, however they feel. So that the work of the **chorus, against many odds, is indeed good and faithful service.**

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Why Not a Women's Parliament?

By
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY
(*Editor of "John Bull"*).

Half measures do not appeal to Mr. Bottomley, and in the following article he proposes to give women, not merely the vote, but a separate Parliament of their own, and discuss s with characteristic enthusiasm its scope and privileges, and the beneficial effect it would have in dealing with matters affecting the welfare of women and children.

Photo Dobson, Liverpool.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley, the author of the following striking article.

NOTORIOUSLY, I am an optimist—a "fatuous optimist" I have been called—but I am not sanguine enough to believe that we have heard the last of the "Suffragette Problem," that it has died a natural death in the agony of war. I wish I could think so. It would simplify matters immensely. But we must not be too impatient, and one thing at least is certain: we shall never again approach the solution of old vital questions in the spirit of rancour and bitterness, of envy and uncharitableness, which was so ugly a feature of our pre-war politics.

Real Warfare *v.* Sham-Fighting.

If the war has taught us nothing else, it has shown us the wicked folly of domestic strife, of wrangling discord between brother and brother, and brother and sister, between man and man, and man and mate. Unless I am grossly mistaken, a taste of real warfare has cured us for ever of our love of sham-fighting, and God forgive us if ever again we utter such blasphemy against His eternal Law as is implied in that hideous phrase, "the sex war."

That men and women, the joint-trustees of posterity, should come to words and blows over any such puny absurdity as a vote, is a sight for the mingled wrath and laughter of Olympus. It must never occur again. And please understand that in putting forward certain definite suggestions of my own, I do so entirely "without prejudice," as the lawyers say—without prejudice to wider considerations of women's place in the State. One thing at a time, and for the present I am content to sketch out a single Reform.

Set Up a House of Ladies!

My scheme is designed to meet the immediate and obvious difficulties of the situation, to reconcile the claims of women with the prejudices of men, and to serve, if you like, as a half-way house to the complete "emancipation" of women. My plan is a bold and generous one. I am more "feminist" than the Feminist; I would go farther than the Suffragette. Briefly, I propose to give women not merely a vote, but a Parliament of their own. By the side of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, I would set up a House of Ladies. Responsible women should have the right not merely to share in the election of men to a Parliament composed entirely of men, but to elect women outright to a Parliament of Women.

You see, I am a whole-hogger, where my friends, Mrs. Pankhurst and her brilliant daughter, are no better than "little-piggers." I demand not only Votes for Women, but Women at Westminster, not in the House of Lords or the House of Lawyers, where their

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

time would be largely wasted and their influence unfelt, but in a special Convocation of Women with direct legislative power. How do you like the idea? No, no—don't commit yourself in a hurry. Let us consider how the scheme would work.

I am not proposing, of course, that we should have two Houses of Parliament with co-extensive powers. Apart from other obvious objections, that would merely lead to overlapping and waste of effort. My plan is—and I venture to think it will commend itself to the commonsense of the nation—that men should manage their own affairs, while women are left mistresses of *their* own domain.

The Scope of the Women's Parliament.

Broadly speaking, all matters specially affecting the welfare of women and children should be reserved for the Women's Parliament. Immense possibilities are latent in the scheme.

The industrial rights of women, problems of child welfare, the education of young children, measures of sexual protection—are but a few of the subjects that would automatically fall within the purview of the Women's Chamber. A Bill falling within any of the above categories, or otherwise obviously affecting the interests of women, might be certified, in whole or in part, by the Speaker of the House of Commons for the consideration of the Women's Parliament, and in matters so referred to them their powers should be absolute. In their own special realm, I would have no check upon their discretion, no veto upon their authority. In a disputed case the Lords should bow to the Ladies. *Place aux Dames!*

Safeguarding Feminine Interests.

By way of illustration, I may perhaps be permitted to mention the recent discussions in the House of Commons in regard to the proposed alterations in the Criminal Law Amendment Act. To my mind, there was something almost indecent in the public discussion by a male assembly, largely unsympathetic and uninformed, of matters intimately affecting the honour and purity of women and female children.

As I read the debates, I could not help reflecting upon the force and cogency of the women's plea for a practical share in the vital tasks of legislation. Had my scheme been in operation, several clauses in the Home Secretary's Bill, matters with which no decent man is practically concerned, embodied in a separate measure, would have been referred to the Women's Parliament. I cannot say what their conclusions would have been, but I am sure they would have been just and wise and touched with the living flame of sympathy.

When the war is over, we shall be sure to hear more of the "congestion" of Parliamentary business, of the inability of the Legislature to keep pace with public requirements. Most likely the old demand for "Devolution" will again be raised, and as a first step I propose Home Rule in the Women's Kingdom. The Women in Council will find countless pressing social and industrial problems ready to their hands. Apart from the special powers I have indicated, they should have authority to initiate legislation, to propose reforms—to devise, debate, and approve new measures, subject to the ultimate approval of the principal Houses of Legislature.

Political Education of Women.

In this way I firmly believe that the Women's Parliament would become not merely a valuable part of the machinery of government and a practical safeguard for feminine interests, but a splendid training ground for the political intelligence of the sex. Wasn't it old Bobby Lowe who, when the franchise was widely extended among the working-classes, bowed to the inevitable with the remark that "we must educate our masters"? In a similar sense, it is high time that the political education of women was undertaken, not of a chosen few—of the propertied class and the "intellectuals"—but of the rank and file—the mothers and wives of to-day and to-morrow; and I submit that there is no better way than by apprenticing them to the business of government in those departments of public affairs that are peculiarly their own.

After all, the majority of women are very little interested in problems of Trade and Tariffs, of Foreign Policy and Imperial Finance, or other abstruse questions that are the sport of the trained politician. Rightly and naturally, their chief concern is with the Home, with its sanctity and protection, with the welfare of the family and the future of the race.

Quite properly, they claim the right to self-defence in the industrial struggle, the power of protecting their children from moral and material ills, and of shaping the social conditions under which their great task of motherhood is to be discharged. To these just demands we can no longer return a solemn *non possumus*. We must call the women into council. On the morrow of Victory, let the first Parliament of Women be convened and opened in person by Her Gracious Majesty the Queen.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A Vote for Every Woman.

And what should be the "franchise" for the new House of Parliament—that is to say, how and by whom should it be elected? Personally, I wouldn't allow the men to have anything to do with it. Every woman of full age should be entitled to a vote, and the House should be elected and sit and adjourn and prorogue contemporaneously with the Commons. It should have a President and Vice-President who would correspond to the Speaker and Deputy-Speaker of the Men's House, and all other necessary officials, with a competent staff of Parliamentary draftsmen to prepare its Bills, and every measure passed by it should be the force of law, subject only to the veto of the two other houses.

Oh yes, I know what you are going to say, my suffrage friends: "Why should *our* Bills be subject to the men's veto when *theirs* would be passed without *our* consent?" Quite so—quite so; but, dear ladies, what a fine start it would be! Look at the Home Rulers. It is an illustration. For years they fought and struggled, as you have done, defying law and order and going to prison, as you have done. Yet to-day they are waiting patiently and contentedly for a compromise which shall bring peace in place of discord. And so will you.

Prove Your Capabilities.

Get first, such recognition as a Women's Parliament would confer upon your political status; then show the nation what kind of service you are capable of rendering—and the rest will be easy; that is, if you want there to be any "rest." Personally, I don't think you will. I believe you will find your hands so full that for years to come you will have no time for further agitation.

Just reflect upon the vast problems which the war will open up for the attention of such a Parliament as I have suggested. That "things will never be the same again" has become a truism; but it is especially applicable to the case of woman. The war has "discovered" her; and it is a great discovery—perhaps the greatest in all the history of mankind. Not only has she proved a veritable "ministering angel"; she has been a true help-mate and fellow-worker. Except for the actual fighting—which must naturally always remain the proud prerogative of the men—she has done everything which has had to be done to defeat the German foe.

The Biggest Problem on Record.

I often wonder what the early Victorians would think if they could come to life to-day and see the army of women war-workers all around us! Munition workers, tram conductors, railway ticket-collectors, booking clerks, "postmen," "telegraph boys," messengers, ambulance-bearers, farmers, doctors, nurses, motor-drivers, "carmen"—*what* a transformation! And what is going to happen when the boys come home? It will be the biggest social problem the world has ever had to tackle—and without the counsel and assistance of the women it will never be solved.

Then let us have the Women's House of Parliament, and set about the job. There is much to be done before we shall be ready for the Queen to open it. First we must get the Registration of Voters into shape; then we must have a small, practical committee to draw up the Rules and Procedure of the Standing Orders of the new House; and we must find the House itself. We shall also require an Act of Parliament setting up the new Chamber—just as we had for the Irish legislature. And it would be rather nice if the two could open at the same time. I know whose proceedings would be more widely read.

Well, ladies, what do you say? And the men, too—I suppose they would have to be consulted? But, you see, you have been so splendid in this war that you can do just what you like with us.

"WOULD I LIKE TO LIVE MY LIFE OVER AGAIN?"

This is the question Mr. Bottomley discusses with his accustomed power and insight in next month's ROYAL. It is a striking article. Be sure you don't miss it!

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A PORTERHOUSE STEAK.

By
Mrs. Stanley
Wrench.

"And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love,
And kiss again with tears!"

She ought never to have married him!

That was the one thought running through her consciousness as, with face turned to the wall, Sue watched the shadows flickering over the ceiling, and counted up miserably all the unkind things they had said to each other barely half-an-hour before.

He had been perfectly horrid.

But then so had she.

Still, and here Susan Manners jerked herself round angrily, he needn't have dragged in his mother's cooking again. Cooking! Ugh! He knew when she married him she wasn't a cook. How could a girl who'd earned her living trimming hats for other women to wear be expected to understand the whole culinary alphabet? How was she to know that a porterhouse steak ought to be kept red and juicy inside? And how was she to know that a frying-pan was not the thing in which to cook a porterhouse steak? Jack ought not to bring home such things for her to cook, even though meat was almost double the price in the suburb where they lived.

She could hear him splashing about in the bathroom adjoining their bedroom, and she set her teeth. The walls were abominably thin. When he began to whistle she dragged the bedclothes about her ears, and her face grew pink.

"Beast! beast! beast!" she muttered. "Let him go to his mother, or"—here she paused as the daring thought penetrated her brain—"let him have his mother back here to cook for him."

And in the bathroom Master Jack was feeling pretty blue, in spite of his cheerful whistling. He knew in his heart he had said some perfectly horrible things, things he wouldn't have dreamt of uttering under ordinary circumstances, but then——

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A lot may be excused a hungry man.

He had gone without a proper lunch in town, making do with a veal-and-ham pie washed down by a cup of coffee, and had brought the porterhouse steak home as an unwonted luxury; now, remembering the grim and frizzled relics on the dish downstairs, he sighed. Why, even a man knew a porterhouse steak ought not to be fried!

He took a long time over his toilet for the night; he brushed his hair twice, he even cleaned his teeth three times, and when he tip-toed into the bedroom it was with the secret hope that Sue would be asleep. For he was still horribly hungry; the piece of bread and cheese he'd eaten wasn't very satisfying, and he had a notion that if Sue flew at him again with angry recriminations, he might behave worse than before.

Sue's eyes were closed, she was breathing regularly, but her cheeks were flushed and angry-looking, and she'd turned her face to the wall, a certain sign that he was not forgiven.

Jack sighed, took up his candle, and tip-toed out of the room. He remembered the spare-room bed was made up in readiness for his mother, who was expected the day after to-morrow, and he made up his mind to sleep there.

But the minute he closed the door softly behind him Sue sat up in bed, her cheeks crimson, her eyes blazing, a pigtail of dark hair on each shoulder.

"Beast!" she cried, shaking her fist at the door. "To think he should behave like this after five months. I wish——"

But there she paused.

"I wish I'd never got married," she announced to the empty air.

As she looked round the pretty blue and white room her lip suddenly trembled, and flinging herself down she cried into the pillow—Jack's pillow—and her eyes grew hard. They were red and swollen, and Sue knew she looked a fright, but what did it matter? What did anything matter now? Jack didn't love her any more. He thought more about comfort and cooking and nasty porterhouse steaks than kisses and caresses.

Just like a man! Why hadn't somebody warned her?

In the spare-room Jack looked ruefully at the carefully-made bed with the best linen sheets and embroidered pillow-slips and shrugged his shoulders. What did folks want with crochet lace on sheets? Waste of material, he told himself. But, somehow, looking at that neatly-folded top-sheet and immaculate pillow he felt he really dare not venture, so getting his dressing-gown from the bathroom he annexed the eider-down from the spare-room and crept quietly downstairs. He must sleep on the drawing-room sofa. That was all.

Ugh! That marriage should come to this! That a man should have to sleep on a drawing-room sofa with not even a blanket or pillow for comfort!

He clutched at a couple of cushions and tried to arrange these comfortably behind, but probably the sofa was not intended for sleeping upon; at all events, something was wrong, and he could not fit himself in with any degree of ease, so that he rolled over, got up and shook himself, poked the cushions, patted the couch, and finally swore at things in general.

Should he go back and say he was sorry? At the thought of that blue and white room his face softened; then remembering how stubbornly Sue had kept her face averted his eyes grew hard again.

"No, hang it all, I'll stick it out," he said.

Certainly it occurred to him that Sue, so far, had the best of it, but then—here his face changed again—poor little kid—she really was not much more than a kid, after all—poor little kid, she couldn't be expected to sleep on the drawing-room sofa. Perhaps—oh, hang it all, perhaps he ought not to have said so much about the mater's cooking. Why, she'd been married nearly thirty years!

"I'll bet she had to practise on the pater for a bit before she found out how to manage things just right," he told himself with a grim chuckle.

Looking round, he found another cushion, which he stuffed into the small of his back, and this time managed to get fairly comfortable with the eider-down tucked round him for covering. In spite of feeling hungry, in spite of his rather cramped position, in less than ten minutes Jack Manners was sound asleep.

And he dreamt of a luscious porterhouse steak with red gravy and grilled tomatoes, just the sort of dish, in fact, he had expected to enjoy that evening, when he so jubilantly carried home that juicy cut of the best.

Presently he began to snore!

Upstairs, Sue, lying awake, tormented by remorse and vaguely wondering how to make it up without too much loss of dignity, heard the sound.

The first snore was to her like the proverbial red rag to a bull. Sue held the idea, shared by many other women, that even if it is not done on purpose to annoy other people, snoring can, at least, be helped. So she sat up in bed and her eyes blazed.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Of course, he's pretending to be asleep," she said, "and he's doing that to show off. It's bravado. He wants me to think he doesn't care. And I don't. So there!"

Nevertheless, tears shone in her eyes. She had not imagined Jack could be so horrid. Every minute, lying there awake, she had believed he would come back, say he was sorry, kiss her tenderly, and make friends. That was the sort of thing they always did in books.

But then in books they didn't have quarrels over common, vulgar things like a porterhouse steak.

Ugh! Fancy finding romance in steak!

Romance! She sniffed scornfully. There wasn't any such thing as romance in the world. Life was very hard, very humdrum, and people—especially husbands—had no soul.

The snoring ceased, or grew fainter, so that she heard it no longer, and Sue lay down again. She was perfectly certain she wouldn't have a wink of sleep all night, and she was beginning to feel terribly hungry, for she, too, missed her evening meal. She hadn't even had bread and cheese, for she had been too hurt and angry to eat.

Then, all at once, lying there, a new sound broke on her ears. She heard the clatter of a knife and fork.

He annexed the elder-down from the spare-room and crept quietly downstairs. He must sleep on the drawing-room sofa. That was all!

Her bedroom was over the kitchen, and the houses in the suburb where Sue and Jack live are proverbial for their "jerry-built" interiors, so that the sound from the room below was most distinct.

"Oh!" gasped Sue. "Greedy pig!"

But she, too, was hungry, and she thought regretfully of bread and butter and a glass of milk which she might have had, thought of biscuits on the dining-room sideboard, of a nice seed cake in the larder, and—but what was the use? Still, the cavity remained.

Then she grew curious. Now, when a woman's curiosity is aroused it is all up with her caution.

"I wonder what he's cooking," she mused. "What could he get? There's only the eggs and bacon for breakfast."

She sniffed. But she couldn't detect the trace of any eggs and bacony scent. She shook her head.

"Greedy pig!" she said again. "He's shut the kitchen door, of course. I'll go down—yes, I will. I'll go down and—and——" She meant to say: "and tell him what I think," but instead of that she said: "And I'll have some, too."

So, slipping into a warm dressing-gown and looking into the mirror to make sure that her hair was tidy, Sue listened again, her head slightly on one side. Her eyes were still a little swollen with crying, her nose was red, but she dabbed this with powder, and taking up a comb, fluffed out her hair on either side, deciding this made her look more interesting.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Then, holding her dressing-gown closely around her, Sue trotted downstairs.

In the little hall she paused, and her heart seemed to come into her mouth.

She distinctly heard someone in the kitchen.

But it wasn't Jack!

For the drawing-room door was slightly ajar, and she could hear Jack snoring regularly in there, regularly but softly.

Burglars

the house was falling to pieces, for three sofa cushions fell on top of him, and he rolled over against Sue's big humpty-dumpty by the fender, causing the fire-irons to fall with a clatter.

Sue, hearing the noise, immediately imagined that there was more than one burglar, and that one was attacking Jack, and screamed louder than ever.

"Oh, Jack! Jack! My darling!" she cried, then, making a leap forward, she

Not until he had lighted the kitchen gas would Sue venture inside. Then she looked around half fearfully. "He's escaped," she cried.

The thought leapt into her mind, and forgetting that a burglar would not be likely to stay if his whereabouts were discovered, she screamed loudly.

"Jack! Oh, Jack! Save me!"

Jack, amid his dreams of that juicy porterhouse steak and tomatoes, heard her shriek, woke, turned, or, rather, tried to turn, and promptly rolled over on the floor.

"Oh, lord! Zenps!" he groaned, thinking

snatched up Jack's torch from the hall-stand, also his police whistle (Jack, I ought to explain, was a special constable), and without pausing to consider, she blew the whistle loudly and switched on the torch.

So that when Jack rushed out, bewildered by the noise, he was met by a blaze of light which dazzled him so that he could see nothing except the torch glare, and Sue, too

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

excited to see properly, and imagining that here was the escaping burglar, blew her whistle again. Then she remembered the latest cinema picture she had seen.

"Hands up—or I fire!" she cried.

"Oh, lord!" groaned Jack. "My poor little Sue. I've driven her to this!"

"Jack!" she cried, dropping the police whistle, and clinging to him. "Jack, there's a man in the kitchen."

Jack's arms went around her, and he held her fast. His lips sought hers.

"Good luck to him!" he remarked.

"But Jack, dearest, he's a burglar—he's broken in," she cried excitedly. "I heard him. That's why——"

There she paused. She would not say that was why she came down now, with Jack's kisses fresh on her lips.

He kissed her again.

"Come on, sweetheart, let's see," he said. "It must be your fancy."

She hung back, but Jack advanced boldly to the kitchen door, flung it open, and flashed the torch inside.

"There's nobody here," he said.

But not until he had lighted the kitchen gas would Sue venture inside. Then she looked around half fearfully.

"He's escaped," she cried, but there was a note akin to relief in her voice.

"Must have been your fancy," he remarked. "Burglars wouldn't find anything to burgle here, that's very certain. You must have imagined it."

"I didn't," she assured him. "Positively, Jack, I heard him rattling knives and forks—at least," she added, "it sounded like it."

Jack glanced at the table as she spoke. After she had cleared away the supper things Sue usually left a tray ready for the morning on the kitchen table, and as usual that tray was there. But he saw something else as well.

The dish on which the charred and frizzled porterhouse steak had appeared had been set here in disgust, too. He remembered it perfectly well when he came out in the kitchen to get his slippers. Now the dish was there, but it held no steak.

He pointed dramatically to the table.

"Look!" he cried.

She looked.

"Oh!" she exclaimed in a very shocked voice, "he's eaten our steak."

"Well, good luck to him," he said again—"good luck to him, I say. Look at this, Sue," and he pointed to a footmark on the table. It was unmistakable.

"Oh!" cried Sue, stamping her foot, "if it isn't that old beast of a cat again from next door. He's always stealing."

Jack laughed as he went to the scullery window, which he remembered now he had set open to free kitchen and scullery of the fumes from the burnt steak. It was still open, and there were footmarks on the window-sill, footmarks corresponding to the ones beside the empty dish on the kitchen table.

So it was the cat!

He looked at Sue. Her mouth was very wistful.

"Jack, darling," she faltered—"I—I'm sorry I burnt the steak."

"Oh, blow the old steak!" cried Jack, and his arms went round her again. "Bless your little heart!"

"You see, nobody taught me how to cook," she murmured, her head on his shoulder. "But, Jack—dear—I do—know how to cook eggs and bacon!"

They looked at each other.

The same thought leapt at each. Both were hungry.

"Shall we——?" cried Jack. "Let's ——!" she answered gaily.

And whilst they fried eggs and bacon for two, at one o'clock in the morning, Jack made coffee—excellent coffee, too—and laid the kitchen table for the impromptu meal which he afterwards declared tasted better than anything he'd ever had in all his life.

"Sue," he cried, helping himself to another slice of bread, "I don't care what anyone says, there's a real art in cooking bacon and eggs to perfection—like this."

Then he laid down his knife and fork.

"Sweetheart," he said, "I'm awfully sorry I said such horrid things. I—I didn't mean them at all."

She laid her hand over his mouth.

"Kiss me," she whispered.

They kissed.

Which is all that need be recorded, unless I mention the fact that next day Sue bought a cookery-book. Also that Jack got his luncheon, as usual, in town.

Also that Mrs. Smith next door remarked on the failing appetite of Thomas, her big black cat.

Thomas could have told a great deal.

But, being a gentleman, he held his tongue.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Photo Frederick A. Hendred

Miss Gladys Cooper, who is appealing for the Fresh Air Fund, and her little son, John.

Please Help the Kiddies!

Miss Gladys Cooper, the beautiful young actress who in private life is Mrs. Herbert Buckmaster and the mother of two charming children, Joan and John, has very kindly consented to appeal this year in the ROYAL on behalf of the Fresh Air Fund—the children's charity. It exists, as most readers of the ROYAL know, to send City children to the country in summer time. 1s. 3d. pays for a day's holiday for one child, and 15s. sends a child to the country for a fortnight. All working expenses are borne by the promoters, and the whole of the money subscribed directly benefits the children. Please send subscriptions to the Hon. Sec. F.A.F., care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. 2.—[Ed. R.M.]

THE war penetrates even to the nursery, and Joan, my little girl, who is six and a-half, came to me with a very solemn face the other day.

"Nurse says it'll cost a lot more to go to the seaside this year, mother," she said. "Do you think you can afford it if—if John and I go without sugar with our porridge?" (John, I may explain, is my son, aged one and a-half, and both he and Joan are rare sugar babies.)

"I think perhaps we can manage it without that," I told her, realising the heroism of the offer, at which Joan capered away in high glee to acquaint her small brother with the news that both sugar and paddling were to be theirs this summer.

It was Joan's offer to give up sugar—a tremendous sacrifice!—that made me realise how much the seaside meant to her. And yet even at home Joan has the garden; Regent's Park is near by with its grass and lake, and her nursery is by no means to be despised. There are many counter-attractions in Joan's case, but—and this brings me to the point!—it is quite otherwise with some less fortunate little people who live in drab streets and are not even on nodding terms with a buttercup. They don't dare hope for much—just one day in the country with plenty to eat and freedom to romp and pick flowers—but if they don't get that, well, there are no lesser attractions to fall back upon.

You've no idea what a day in the country means to these poor little souls whose lives are spent in sordid tenements, with only the streets as playground. Those streets are very hot in summer-time, and very, very crowded. And not very far away there are green fields full of clover and buttercups, hedges scented with honeysuckle, shady woods crying out for the sound of children's laughter. It is a positive fairyland, a fairyland waiting to be peopled—and the magic key that unlocks the gate lies in your hands.

Even in war-time most of you can spare a trifle, and you couldn't buy as much pleasure with it in any other way. A whole day's happiness for some jaded, street-weary kiddie, at the trifling cost of fifteen pence! And more than a day's happiness, really, because throughout the rest of the summer that golden day will live in the child's memory, and the stifling days in town will be a little more bearable in consequence.

Those of you who are beloved of the gods, and can spare larger sums, I would remind that fifteen shillings will give a delicate or ailing child a whole fortnight of fresh air and good food in the country. Wouldn't you like to feel that some pale-faced little kiddie who had never known much of the joys of childhood owed her rosy cheeks and renewed health to you? I am sure you would, and that's why I'm hoping for pounds as well as shillings.

You all helped me so splendidly last year, so I'm counting on you again. You won't disappoint me, will you?

Gladys Cooper

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Way of a Soldier

By E. A. Morphy.

"The meeting of these champions proud
Seemed like the bursting thunder-cloud."

Rafferty's golden hour had come, and his soul sang for the joy of it.

The sangar was small, the watch perilous.

Sergeant Curtis—unconscious alike of Rafferty's rancour and his proper identity—studied with keen, untiring gaze the surrounding rocks and ridges.

In the shadiest corner of the sangar, with his helmet tilted over his face, lay a Corporal—apparently asleep. A sniper's bullet had hit him in the liver about three hours earlier while the little detachment to which he belonged was climbing to cross the ridge to the eastward.

Curtis and Rafferty had been left to guard the injured man while Lieutenant Maxon and the other ten men of the party had continued their quest. Their object was to signal, if possible, the column that was advancing to join their own main body by way of the eastern passes.

The outcome of the manœuvre no longer concerned the Corporal. His troubles were over. He was newly dead.

A bloated vulture swooped down from the zenith and perched on the black cliff behind the sangar; a yellow lark twittered ecstatically in the brazen glamour of the sky. For the rest, all was the silent calm and eternal desolation of the Khyber Hills.

Rafferty, at one side of the sangar, was covertly watching the Sergeant at the other. His war-bitten features were expressionless as a mask of mahogany; no spark of the murderous fire that gnawed at his heart was betrayed in the grey glitter of his eyes. Curtis, fresh from the link battalion, knew practically nothing about the private, save that he was surly by repute, but undoubtedly the best shot in the regiment. Even "with drink taken"—which was not a rare phenomenon—Rafferty was never a communicative man.

Eight years ago, as a matter of fact, the Irishman had sought the King's uniform as a haven of safety and rest. At that particular juncture in his career the police of two-and-thirty counties were scouring the countryside night and day for sight or sign of Barney Tobin of Cahirogue. That same Barney Tobin was entangled in the shooting of a landlord, or some equally objectionable personage. He was never caught. But the patriot who once bore the name of Barney Tobin served the Sassenagh, and served him well, as Private Tim Rafferty.

Rafferty never dared go back to Cahirogue, but one day in London—five years after his departure—he met old Con Murphy, the horse-dealer who travelled near and far. Though professionally crooked as a ram's horn, Murphy was patriotically true as steel to his own kind, and his eyes were sharp as those of an eagle.

"Barney, avick!" he whispered cautiously, as he overtook the fugitive and touched him on the shoulder.

Rafferty turned and glowered savagely at the man.

"Me name's Rafferty!" he snapped, "and——"

"Misther Rafferty, thin," said old Con quietly. "Sure yez know 'tis the friend I am, anyways. Come in and have a drink, me boy, and let an ould man tell yez of a place be name of Cahirogue!"

Rafferty followed the horse-dealer and learnt the home news of five lost years.

So the mother was dead!

"God rest her sowl! And little Nano?"

Nano was Barney's sister—the apple of his eye.

Old Con knew it. Many was the time in the bygone midsummer days that he had seen the blue-eyed colleen scampering bare-legged after Barney by the riverside. Time

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

and again, too, of a cold winter's night had he seen Barney with his arms about the child, and she cuddled up in his lap before the turf fire.

"Is it little Nano, Barney avick?" whispered old Con, as he nervously pretended to blow the departed froth from his glass of Guinness. "Mother o' Mercies, boy! Sure I thought yez knew! 'Twas the mother's death, belike—the sorrow of it turned the child's head, and she ran away with a soldier!"

Con told him all about it, sympathetically, gravely.

"Curtis, his name was, and he stood six foot high, and his hair was light and curly-like, and he was handsome as Hell, only for the bit of a scar on his cheek and the pepperin' of blue powder marks on the left side of his forehead."

A week later Rafferty had lost his corporal's stripe, and thereafter he took to the habit of drinking fiercely. But he came of the nation whose people are dreamers of dreams; and now, under the blistering sky of the Frontier, with the vulture blinking on its sable perch behind him and the yellow lark twittering overhead, he saw Con Murphy with the empty glass in his hand, standing by the side of Curtis in the sangar, and pointing significantly at the scar on the Sergeant's cheek and the blue speckles of powder tatooed into the bronzed skin of his forehead.

Curtis sensed danger. Alert, vigilant, self-possessed, he carefully scanned the uncountable death-traps of the encircling hills.

Presently Rafferty broke the silence.

"Sergeant," he said softly, "may I speak to you as man to man?"

Curtis turned to him with a quick glance of astonishment.

"Cough it up, man!" he answered. "What's the row?"

Rafferty looked him squarely in the face.

"You're a stranger to the regiment, Sergeant," said he, "but they say you're a fair man and true to your word. But you've the stripes on your sleeves, and this is war. May I talk to you as man to man, with your coat off?"

Sergeant Curtis raised his eyebrows in an expression of amazed concern.

"Got the sun on your nut, Rafferty?"

The private shook his head.

"Divil a bit of it, Sergeant Curtis!" he laughed. "'Tis cold in earnest I do be, and——"

Curtis felt the menace in the Irishman's voice and noted the cold glitter in his eye. Automatically his grip tightened on the rifle that he held between his knees.

"Put your fist near the trigger, Sergeant," rasped Rafferty, "and I'll blow your guts out where you sit!"

He paused. His grey eyes now gleamed with unmistakable malignity and hate.

The Englishman's lip stiffened as he returned Rafferty's scowl without wincing. He was essentially a brave man, but what he read in Rafferty's eyes discouraged and puzzled him. The expression was not that of a madman.

"I'm the best shot in the regiment," proceeded Rafferty calmly. "Belike they'll have told yez that. But 'tis not black murder I'm looking for this day. 'Tis retribution for them that was weak!"

Rafferty lowered his voice and kept the muzzle of his rifle levelled at the pit of the Sergeant's stomach. His finger was on the trigger. Curtis knew that, if he stirred, the trigger would be pressed, and Rafferty's horrid threat would be fulfilled to the absolute letter.

"'Tis the handsome man yez was, Sergeant!" went on the Irishman. "But I'm going to put a face on yez like a clubbed goat. Never agin will a girl follow you for the smile of it! D'yez follow me now, Sergeant Curtis? I'm standing between yourself and a girl—and what yez done to her—and the Judgment Day——! And I'm going to take God's judgment off your face!"

Like many another and many a better soldier, Sergeant Curtis had been free with his love-making in his day, but he could recollect no transient attachment of his flightier youth that recalled the name of Rafferty. Involuntarily he raised his hand to his face as the soldier threatened it.

"Drop it!" snarled Rafferty. "'Tis not with the butt I'll be after smashing it, when I could tear yez asunder with me two fists. Lay down your rifle and take off your coat, and stand up to it man to man. If yez don't, so help me! I'll murder yez where ye sit!"

Curtis looked across at Rafferty, eye to eye.

"Fists, fair and square?" he asked quietly.

"'Fair and square,' is it?" repeated Rafferty hoarsely, with a twitch at the trigger of his Lee-Enfield. "Don't yez know ye'd be meat this blessed minute if it was not?"

Curtis laid down his rifle and stood up from the rock on which he had been squatting. He was wondering—wondering. He now felt fully convinced that Rafferty was no maniac, but some husband or father, or brother mayhap, with a real or fancied vengeance on account of some girl who had used his name. He might as well face the music and teach the soldier his error.

"All right, Rafferty," said he briskly;

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"but this is a risky place, and there's better work for us to do."

"Stow the gab!" growled Rafferty. "Take off your coat and fight!"

In a couple of seconds Curtis was facing the soldier in his grey flannel shirt-sleeves. Rafferty laid down his rifle and stripped off his own jacket.

As Rafferty stepped up to him, Curtis drew himself together warily, his left extended, his right guarding his menaced features. Both men were big and finely built; both were hard as nails, and in the pink of condition.

"Begin, can't yez?" rasped the Irishman. "'Tis the right o' yer stripes to hit first, and not have me shot for striking yez unbeknownst!"

The Sergeant stepped forward promptly and deftly. He feinted with his left, parried a swift counter, then dodged aside nimbly as Rafferty whirled in with a swishing cut at his jaw. The dodge saved him a knock-out. In Rafferty's blow lurked the punch and venom of hate unspeakable, but it merely grazed the jaw of the Sergeant. Yet even the graze jarred.

Rafferty had leapt as he hit out. The swing took him past his enemy. Quick as light, he spun around again and faced Curtis with positions reversed.

The bed of the sangar was of loose rocks that made an unstable floor. Rafferty slipped on one of the rocks, and the rough granite screeched as the hob-nails of his boots scraped it. Curtis, shaken but recovering quickly, balanced himself on another boulder and hit out again, snappy as a leopard, while Rafferty was still staggering for a foothold.

The blow caught the Irishman just back of the ear, but barely touched him. The stretch was the fraction of an inch too far for the crack to get home, but Rafferty stumbled again as he ducked from it.

Recovering himself like a cat, Rafferty found a foothold on another rock that raised him six inches above the Sergeant. Game as a pebble, Curtis lunged forward with a body blow. As he lunged, the rock he stood on turned. He slipped, and Rafferty's left took him squarely in the teeth. Before the Sergeant's feet held fair again, Rafferty's right had smashed into his ribs over the heart, and he staggered backwards.

Then Providence intervened to save him, with the same loose rock that had nearly proved his undoing. Rafferty stepped on it and stumbled again before he could follow up his advantage with a knock-out.

The impetus of Rafferty's rush and stumble carried him to the outer breastwork of the sangar, beside the body of the Corporal. There, he turned and stood facing the spur which linked to the main ridge the ruined Buddhist Tope whereon the sangar stood. His knuckles bled scarlet.

For one hesitant fraction of a second he ducked—head low, body bent forward for a body blow or uppercut, expecting Curtis to charge.

But Curtis—his face dripping blood and his grey shirt red with it—was standing foot forward, fists ready, but apparently unconscious of his advantage. He was not even looking at his opponent, but at something beyond and behind him on the opposite side of the pass.

Rafferty cautiously lurched a step forward, eyeing his enemy, watchful as a hawk.

As he thus watched him, a faint pink streak suddenly glistened fresh and new across the Sergeant's left cheek, about two inches below the powder marks that had betrayed his identity to the private. Ere Rafferty had blinked his amazement, the streak turned ruby red. Simultaneously, but ever so slightly, Curtis staggered.

Then his hands dropped from the guard, and his eyes met those of the Irishman.

"Get to your rifle, Rafferty!" he commanded sharply. "There's the niggers! We're cut off!"

The Irishman's jaw set and his teeth gritted.

"Stand up to it!" he shouted. "Stand up and fight, or by——"

The Sergeant slipped down under the stone breastwork and gripped his rifle.

"None of your lip, Private Rafferty!" he snapped. "You're fighting the King's enemies now, and you're taking your orders from me!"

Rafferty's jaw relaxed and dropped, but he still stood with clenched fists, irresolute.

"Get under cover, Rafferty!" ordered Curtis in a voice that grated like a file.

Automatically obedient to discipline, the Irishman sank beneath the breastwork, still glowering at his foe.

"I'll do you yet, Curtis!" he growled. "It ain't fair you're playing! Ye said it was man to man!"

"None of your lip, Rafferty!" again snapped the Englishman. "You'll obey orders and forget your man-to-man rot till this job is through! None of your back talk there! Look out! Confound you, man! Can't you shoot?"

The Tope was an enormous mound of rocks and ruined masonry—a relic of Buddhist days—built on the end of a spur that jutted out from the parent ridge on the northern side of the narrow valley that held the pass. On either side of this valley, the overlooking ridges were vast wildernesses of

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

piled-up rocks, naked and destitute of everything save lizards and heat. Their crests were narrow as the mounds over graves. Topping each mound was a long row of great boulders, like the teeth of some Titan saw. From these teeth the hill on each side sloped down abruptly at an appalling angle.

Beyond and parallel to these encompassing ridges that held in the pass like a vice were other identical ridges enclosing other almost identical valleys; and from crest to crest of these rock-strewn chasms rarely seemed to be more than half-a-mile across.

Above the crest, across the way from where the English Sergeant and Irish private crouched sheltering under their breastworks, now lazily floated a dozen or so beautiful wisps of alabaster smoke that faded gradually into nothingness against the amber-tinted azure of the sky.

"Look at them, you perishing blighter, and shoot! And you the best shot in the regiment!"

Rafferty, hugging obediently the wall of the breastwork, looked at the smoke wisps, then glowered at the non-commissioned officer.

"'Twould be no murder to see ye shot, Sergeant Curtis!" said he, accentuating the rank of his enemy with studded acerbity. "What the deuce do I care who's shot? I'm obeying orders, says you. Look at me now, Mister Sergeant! I'm obeying orders!"

He had shuffled into his jacket as he crouched, and was trimly-clad, belts and all, leering sardonically at the Englishman.

"If ye promise ye'll stand up again to me—man to man—when this job is through," said he, "I'll fight 'till me heart cracks!"

Sergeant Curtis slowly extracted from a remote corner of his haversack a handkerchief brown with dirt, and wiped his bleeding mouth and the scar on his cheek. While he was doing so, the rocks about him chirruped strange chirrups, and showed scratches of white and grey. The wiping finished, and the handkerchief turned red, he lifted his rifle and fired carefully at the puff-speckled side of the opposite ridge, whence the Afridi snipers were potting at the sangar.

As one clip of cartridges was emptied, and he had to pause to reload, he spoke again to Rafferty.

"'Man to man' it will be again as soon as this is over," said he. "You have my word on that!" Then, changing his tone, he added: "Now, Rafferty, no shirking! To your work, man! You're a soldier!"

Rafferty moved to the side of the sangar nearest the ridge, where a clump of old masonry rose, chin-high, above the breastwork on one corner. Behind this he stood, his rifle pointed out above the higher corner of the breastwork.

"There's dozens of 'em, Sergeant!" said he. "But here goes!"

The grey eyes of the Irishman narrowed into slits as he nuzzled down to the stock of his rifle and awaited the next puff of smoke. Then he fired, and paused expectantly, peering at the opposite ridge.

"That's wan, Sergeant!" said he. "A fair cop!"

"Good!" said Curtis briefly. "Get 'em again. They're coming thicker and thicker."

Often thus Rafferty fired, and Sergeant Curtis duly praised him.

But closer and closer, along the ridges and down the slopes, came the circling puffs of the rifles and *jezails* in the hands of the beleaguerers.

"Rafferty!" called Curtis.

"Yes, Sergeant!"

They were back to back at opposite walls of the sangar, Curtis crouching behind the breastwork, Rafferty standing up by his clump of rock.

"Come over here and look!" said Curtis. "They've stopped firing this side. I think Mr. Maxon is fighting his way back!"

Rafferty turned and crossed the sangar to the Sergeant.

The firing from the ridge that joined the spur behind the Tope had ceased. No further slugs or nails or bits of telegraph wire were spitting in from that direction. But Rafferty could hear the crackle of desultory firing and observe smoke-puffs from guns not directed at the sangar.

Every nerve alert, the Sergeant and the Irishman listened. Faintly but distinctly they could hear the staccato rattle of the British rifles above the louder crack of the Afridis' Martinis and the still louder reports of their *jezails*.

The afternoon was ageing. The sting had gone out of the sun. Curtis and Rafferty both knew very well that the column to which they belonged had overlooked their absence, and was already—according to custom—returning to the camp from which the reconnaisance had started before dawn.

They were thus left alone to the enemy, and the odds were a hundred to one that the entire detachment would be blotted out before midnight.

Meanwhile, the change of front shown by the snipers on the spur indicated that Lieutenant Maxon was striving to bring his men back to the sangar. It was a rough gauntlet through which they had to run, but a fighting chance remained for them in the fact that the Hillmen—accustomed to husband their

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

He slung the officer to his back, picked up his rifle, and raced back to the sangar. [*Page* 23, *col.* 2.]

ammunition with niggardly care—practise only on the steady mark, and are poor shots at moving objects.

Even as the beleaguered couple in the sangar paused to listen, a scurrying group of the Hillmen came clambering over the hill-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

crest at the neck of the spur that held the Tope, and—ignoring the two men in the sangar—turned and fired their pieces down the farther side of the ridge. It was plain to the observer that the Subaltern and his handful of men were close up.

"Be your lave, Sergeant," said Rafferty, again laying his cheek to his rifle-butt, "I'll try and pick 'em off while the light lasts."

He spoke respectfully, with no assumption of superior powers. Swiftly—almost carelessly—he laid his sights on the ridge crests and fired.

Tossed-looking objects that resembled bundles of dirty linen dropped back, limp and crumpled, and subsided into the crannies of the rocks, or tumbled insensately down the sheer slope of the hill. An occasional brown leg or arm sticking out from these frowsy-looking bundles, or a brown head shaken loose from the ragged *puggri*, showed that the objects were men.

Curtis joined Rafferty, shooting slowly but effectively, pausing every now and then to listen.

The occasional cackle of the Lee-Enfield rifles that was borne to them across the ridge sounded spasmodic and weak. The shadows of the rocks were swiftly lengthening, and night falls fast in the Hills.

Rafferty continued picking off every figure that showed against the rocks or the skyline, but the Afridis had quickly grown cautious. They were moving invisibly up the ridge, dodging from rock to rock, wary as rats, yet steadily converging towards the neck of the spur, so as to intercept the returning party as it topped the ridge.

Rafferty's quicker eye was the first to sense the climax.

"Look out, Sergeant!" he whispered, hoarse with a new excitement. "Hould yer fire if ye ain't sure! They're coming!"

The rocks by the neck of the spur seemed to heave with life. Rafferty emptied his clip of cartridges in a brace of seconds and swiftly slipped in another.

Topping the ridge at the end of the spur came a gleam of steel; then a khaki helmet; then another and another.

As the first man topped the ridge he jumped down from the crest rock and ducked for shelter into a cranny. He crouched low and blazed with his rifle at a cluster of smoke wisps and faces on the Tope side of the ridge and scarce thirty paces beneath him.

A scurrying rush of barefooted Hillmen broke cover and sprang up at him. Some dropped back, stricken. Others continued to clamber forward.

The two other soldiers who came into view had each two rifles slung by their straps from their shoulders. For a second they stood thus silhouetted against the sky. Then they stooped and hauled up two helpless comrades that were lifted to them from the far side of the ridge.

Half a hundred *jezails* and Martinis cracked up at them all from an invisible fringe of stalkers in the rocks below. A cumbrous pother of struggling and staggering men fretted the skyline.

Rafferty and Curtis blazed into the yellow spatters of fire that began to show through the quickening gloom where aforetime smoke wisps guided their aim. Shouts and oaths rang out in English and "Barrack" Hindi, and in the coarse Pushtu of the tribes. The clinking and grating of steel on steel—bayonet and barrel on knife and *tulwar*—rattled among the rocks and crannies. Then Englishmen and Hillmen rolled pell-mell over a boulder in grips of death.

Out of the shambles emerged one big soldier, who looked like a giant in the gloom. He was carrying a smaller man, whose arm dangled strangely.

"Begobs!" ejaculated Rafferty, pausing to insert a new clip of cartridges, "'tis Big Kelly bringing up Mr. Maxon!"

The big soldier thus referred to clambered up the rocks with his burden and gained the ridge of the spur leading to the Tope. For a little distance he ran and jumped, from rock to rock, like an antelope. Then suddenly he seemed to wobble, and as he wobbled he seemed to melt into the shadowless gloom of the sun-bereft mountainside.

Back by the neck of the spur the combat had softened. There were still a few soldiers firing into the rocks below them; but the hand-to-hand encounters had ceased.

Sergeant Curtis, in the sangar, had marked the staggering advance of Big Kelly with the Subaltern. He also marked them fall.

No British officer instructs an enlisted man to favour the commissioned ranks in the event of catastrophe. In fact, the opposite principle is taught. Despite this gentlemanly arrangement, however, it is the unalterable habit of the British "Tommy" to ignore all regulations when confronted by any such contingency, and to rescue his officer, be he stricken or fallen, regardless of his own life or safety.

"Rafferty," said Curtis, quietly, "I'm going out for Mr. Maxon. If I miss——"

Rafferty growled out a withering curse.

"If ye're trying to get out of it that aways, Sergeant Curtis," he exclaimed, "ye're countin' on the wrong man! I'll follow yez till Hell splits to let me in after yez!" he added venomously. "I'll drag yez out of the Pit itself to tear the laugh off yer face!"

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Curtis laid down his rifle and leapt to the top of the breastwork.

"Don't be such an ass, Rafferty!" he answered in a tone of quiet authority. "If I miss, you'll play the game and come out after Mr. Maxon, yourself!"

The darkness was almost complete, and the firing of the Hillmen slackened. To those who understood, the comparative calm was by no means reassuring. It is not the custom of the Border tribes to waste ammunition on the darkness, when by an inconsequential delay — a little judicious stalking and then a united rush from a short distance—the overthrow of the enemy can be more economically and more certainly assured.

Rafferty understood this circumstance thoroughly, and pondered it apathetically as Curtis slid out of the sangar.

The game was pretty well up, and he had yet to tear the face off the evil-doer. Was there ever such luck?

Desultory sniping still continued from all sides. Wherever Rafferty saw a spurt of flame he fired. Once or twice he fancied he made a hit. His eyes quickly accustomed themselves to the deepening gloom, as he noted every part of the Sergeant's advance. He could see that Kelly had fallen forward on his face when he was hit, and Mr. Maxon was lying sprawled over him like a shield.

Curtis was hastening bravely toward the fallen pair, but the sharp-eyed Hillmen had detected him, and those below were redoubling their fire. The imminent danger of the man appalled Rafferty. It threatened to destroy his opportunity for personal vengeance. Somehow it had become impressed upon his inexorable sense of retribution that the bloodsome and permanent effacement of the seducer's good looks was essential to his own and his sister's salvation.

"Howly Mother! He's down!"

Rafferty gulped.

Not five paces from where the Lieutenant and his would-be rescuer lay, Curtis had tottered and fallen. Immediately below and about eighty yards distant, a shadowy group of figures burst from the rocks and were frantically climbing upwards.

Rafferty aimed at them as best he could, and emptied his clip in a dozen seconds. Then he picked up the Corporal's rifle. Gripping it club-fashion by the barrel, he leapt over the breastwork and ran like a maniac.

Where Curtis had fallen he stopped, and *spluttered* out a litany of impotent blas*phemy*.

The Sergeant had rolled into a cranny and was lying very still, but as Rafferty sprang to his side he gave a grunt.

"Leave me, and get in your officer!" he ordered.

The Irishman gave a little yelp of ecstasy.

"Yez ain't dead!" he cried. "Glory be!"

Then he sped onward.

"Are yez dead, sor?"

Rafferty lifted the Subaltern by his Sam Browne belt. The youngster seemed to smile, with half-closed eyes. He was breathing, but he was hurt too much to do more. He said nothing.

"Are you kilt, Kelly?"

Rafferty shook the giant soldier, who sprawled like a mattress under the wounded Subaltern.

The man's head dangled loosely forward, and blood trickled from behind the ear.

"God rest his sowl!" said Rafferty.

Then, as he stooped to pick up the officer, he sensed the approach of men below him. He heard them panting as they breasted the rocks.

Snatching up the dead soldier's rifle, he fired at the sounds below, emptying the clip of cartridges and trusting to luck for the rest. Then, lightly and easily, he slung the officer to his back, picked up his rifle, and raced back to the sangar.

Bullets whizzed by, and some spattered near him, but nothing hit the flying mark.

At the sangar wall he turned and got a front grip on the Subaltern. He held him by waist-belt and shoulder, and slipped him gently across the breastwork and down to the rocks inside, where he lay with the dead Corporal as his pillow.

Pausing but an instant to see that the job was fairly done, Rafferty turned again, in a haste that was absolutely frantic, and raced to rescue the man on whom he wished to wreak the nourished vengeance of three burning years.

The Sergeant's head was bent forward wearily on his breast as he sat in his rock-bound cranny. But he still had his senses.

"Get — Mr.—Maxon—first—you—fool!" he whispered, almost inaudibly.

"I got him!" rasped the Irishman. "An' I got to get you now!"

He peered eagerly into the Sergeant's face as he spoke and laughed queerly.

"Glory be!" he muttered exultantly. "They've left me to spoil that yet!"

Then a *jezail* banged behind Rafferty, and he staggered. A hoarse voice snarled from above a rock behind and below him; a swarthy figure leapt up.

Rafferty's right hand felt numb and useless, but it was in his left that he carried the

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

rifle. For Rafferty was what his countrymen call a *kithogue*. Drill had taught him the right-handed use of the rifle, but he was left-handed by birth.

He caught up the rifle by the barrel again, swift and powerful as a cave man, and flung it with unerring aim at the Hillman's snarling face. The Afridi made no sound as the flying weapon crushed him. He just crumpled backwards into the night.

Thereafter, greatly hampered by his useless arm, but joyously triumphant for all that, Rafferty hefted up the Sergeant, and stalked back with him to the sorry sanctuary of the sangar.

How he got Curtis over the sangar wall, or how he followed, were matters forgotten in the great excitement. But he accomplished it, and sat down, panting, when he felt he was safe. His own wound was through the bone of the forearm, and he considered it slight; but the Sergeant's jacket was soaked with blood about the chest, and Rafferty felt that he might lose his man and his revenge if the wound were not staunched at once.

Awkwardly he fumbled with the buttons of his enemy's tunic.

"What the devil do you want?" growled Curtis, waking up to a mistaken sense of a new danger.

"Shut up!" retorted Rafferty. "I'm looking for where ye're hit!"

"Right-o!" replied Curtis, with a feeble attempt at cheerfulness. "It's only the shoulder; but it was a hard clip!"

Rafferty awkwardly continued his one-handed investigation of the Sergeant's hurt.

Suddenly the sky lit up into a blue-white glamour of radiance unspeakable. A dull "*Ther-om-mp!*" seemed to shake the Hills. The sky was blotted out in the unexpected brightness. Then, like hail on a tin roof, rattled the distant cackle of independent rifle fire.

A star shell had burst above the pass. It was followed by another—and another—and another. A dazzling brightness, unlike moonshine or daylight, irradiated the purple heavens, while the silence immutable of the Khyber Hills echoed back the reverberations of the guns.

At last the column had realised that the detachment had been left behind, and was beleaguered; and a relief-force was coming out to bring in whatever of it was left.

Rafferty sighed half regretfully as he opened the Sergeant's tunic to inspect his hurt by the lights that portended imminent rescue.

To facilitate matters, he drew from the breast pocket a bloodstained photograph of cabinet size, such as half the men in the regiment had had taken of themselves for a rupee apiece in the Sadar Bazaar at Peshawar.

Rafferty recognised the name of the Hindu photographer blazoned large across the back of the card.

"'Twill be the last he'll ever have took; the bloomin' paycock!" he chuckled grimly.

Then he turned over the picture, and bent down critically to study it, as a fresh star shell threw a new glamour over the Tope and the encircling skies.

"Drop it, you swine!" gasped Curtis, clutching helplessly for the portrait. "What do you want prying at a wounded man's——"

He did not finish the sentence.

As the star shell flickered into darkness, Rafferty gave a gasp, as one who would speak, but dared not. Shakily he thrust the blood-streaked photograph into the eager hand of the Sergeant. Then, dazedly, he strove to gnaw open his packet of first-aid dressing with his teeth.

"God spare us both, Sergeant!" he whispered huskily a minute later, as he closed the tunic over the clumsily bandaged shoulder. "And forgive me this day!"

"What are you funking about now, Rafferty?" asked Curtis. "Why are you shivering? You've done well! The regiment will be proud of you!"

"'Twas along o' that girl in the photograft I wanted to tear the face of yez this day, Sergeant," said he. "As that was took in Peshawar, belike she's with you still. 'Tis little Nano, it is—me own sister—her they tould me had run away wid a soldier from Cahirogue!"

Curtis chuckled feebly.

"I married out of Cahirogue," said he, "and that's the picture of her I had taken at Peshawar."

"Begobs!" murmured Rafferty, as though soliloquising to himself. "'Tis the same Nano as the little colleen, only whin did she get her hair up?"

The Sergeant stretched out his hand to the Irishman.

"If you're Barney Tobin," said he, "as well as being that perishing fool, Private Rafferty, I'd like to shake hands with you. Or maybe you want to finish that fight you started first?"

Rafferty unconsciously strove to lift his broken right arm, and winced. Then with his unwounded hand he grasped that of his whilom enemy.

"'Tis the left I'm giving yez!" he excused himself. "For I can't help it. But," he added hurriedly, "'tis nearer the heart, says you—nearer the heart!"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

He turned over the picture, and bent down critically to study it, as a fresh star shell threw a new glamour over the Tope and the encircling skies. "Drop it, you swine!" gasped Curtis, clutching helplessly for the portrait.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE JOTTINGS OF A SUBALTERN.

VI.—MARJORIE.

This month the gallant Subaltern relates how, after many romantic adventures, he meets the girl of his heart, and forgets his previous flirtations in his experience of the real thing.

Of course, no soldier ought to be married. Marriage distracts him from his profession; when he ought to be doing stunts with a prismatic compass or saying "For inspection port *hipe!*" or making out returns of the number of blankets, biscuits, and bolsters in his charge, his brain is occupied with the problem of getting leave to go home or finding excuses for not going home when on leave, as the case may be. And it never occurred to me that I should ever get married till——

But I *am* going to get married! And I am Cosmo Vernon Lacy, Second-Loot in the crackest of crack cavalry, the 31st Pinkshires, the dear old die-hard Poppy-shirts, God bless them!

You see, if only Marjorie hadn't been so frightfully pretty, such an absolute topper, so far above me that I never dared even to dream of loving her for days and days, I should have stayed single for ever and died a field-marshal complete with bâton. But she was, and that was what did it. And I'm jolly glad, I can tell you, and anyway, what's a field-marshal—a *single* field-marshal, that is?

I met Marjorie while we were training in the Grass-shire country. You get a bit of hunting there, and of course we all turned out as often as we could. Before the present shimozzle Marjorie's father, Colonel Langston, was M.F.H. Now she has taken on the job, and jolly well she does it, too.

I never saw anything quite so well turned out as Marjorie. Goodness knows where she got her kit, and her gee was always an absolute picture. She had one of those beautifully cut faces, a little straight nose, and a small, perfect mouth that could set pretty firm, nevertheless, when there was a nasty bit of timber ahead. She was tall and slender—about five seven I should say—and rode like a princess.

Yet somehow or other I never seemed to get any forrarder with Marjorie. Of course, she behaved very charmingly to me, as well as to the rest of the regiment, but apart from that there appeared to be absolutely nothing doing. Those dear grey eyes of hers seemed to look right through me, find out I wasn't a very brainy or distinguished sort of creature, and leave it at that. I generally have a certain amount of confidence—the calm of the veteran who has been under fire before and knows what it's like, so to speak—and it stands me in good stead as a rule. But Marjorie was different; I never knew what she was thinking about me or what she wanted me to do. I

I never saw anything quite so well turned out as Marjorie. Goodness knows where she got her kit.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

came to the sad conclusion that she didn't want me to do anything, and didn't care what I did or whether I did it or not. In other words, I felt completely off the map. It's a rotten feeling.

I tried hard to shine in her eyes. I happened to own one or two good 'uns at the time, and I was always in the first flight. Once Marjorie and I were in at the death just by ourselves. But she only said a few conventional things, and I could have sold a jolly good hunter for cats'-meat, I was so disappointed.

You see, it all seemed so unnecessarily dismal. There was she, a perfect picture of all a girl should be and generally isn't, on a good horse, and there was I, not such a bad youth as some I've met. All round stretched the damp, silent, wintry earth, with that faint, wet smell that makes you feel so beautifully miserable if you are in a plaintive mood, with a flavour of dead leaves and a faint, vague promise of spring to come. I could have slid off my horse and kissed the tip of her top-boot, or snatched her up and galloped to blazes with her. But you can't do these things when a girl sits in her saddle utterly cool and critical and self-possessed, and just throws out one or two little clear-cut, technical remarks.

After that I despaired. I went up to Town for a week-end and took out Bertie on one day and Bobbie on another. They are cast in a different mould; they taught me London's latest cry in frillies and evening frocklets mostly "absent on pass," as we say in the Army, but they couldn't give me back my peace of mind. Finally I left them desolate and returned to Grassshire like a moth returning to a candle. I passed my days longing for Marjorie and getting positively ill-tempered.

At last I made up my mind to risk anything and end my sorrows or else drown them in an ocean of happiness. So one beautiful afternoon after we'd had a magnificent run and a kill I managed to get alone with Marjorie on the jog home. The whole scene is photographed in my mind with that minute faithfulness only possible when one is in love. I could tell you now how many mud splashes Marjorie's horse had on its off fore. I took a long look at her at the last moment in case I should never get a chance of doing it again. I had an idea she might be frightfully angry and cut me dead evermore. The sight of her little, cool, beautiful face absolutely shook the last remnants of courage out of me.

"Marjorie," I stammered, turning beastly red and feeling no end of a fool, "Marjorie, I love you. Marjorie——"

Then I stopped because no more words would come. She never helped me, never gave the slightest sign. I couldn't very well

Some fool of a woman insisted on getting up a dance in aid of the Red Cross or something, and asked the regiment . . . "Miss Langston will be there," she purred to me. "Surely that's an inducement to you to come, isn't it?"

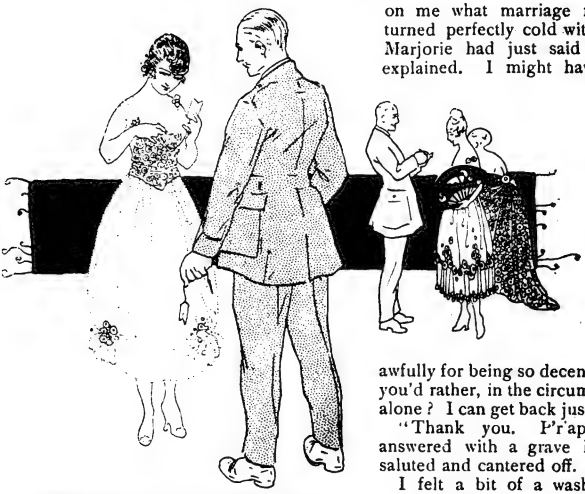
[*Page* 28, *col.* 2.]

leave the situation there, so I set my teeth and went on:

"Will you marry me?"

We rode in silence for a moment or two. The faintest colour had crept into her cheek and faded out. Gad! she was pretty! Then she gave a sort of little sigh and moved her right hand up the reins in the instinctive way one does when something may be going to happen.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



Marjorie did come. She came in a wonderful frock like a pink mist . . . I had to ask her for a dance because we were friends.

She turned and looked me straight in the eyes. I couldn't meet her glance. I felt an absolute, abject ass, and I wished the ground would open and swallow me. Marjorie seemed to nod ever so slightly as if confirming some idea of her own.

"Mr. Lacy," she began, and I knew it was all up, "first of all, I must thank you for—for what you've just said, because I know you mean it sincerely, and that's a great compliment to any girl. It's difficult for me to explain why I can't say yes."

A tinge of disappointment came into her voice, and her mouth sort of crumpled pathetically as a girl's does when she's hurt.

"Asking a girl to marry you isn't like asking for a subscription or a telephone number or something. I don't mean to be horrid. You see, you've got to be so convincing. It means such a lot if a girl agrees; have you ever thought exactly what it does mean? And you aren't very convincing, I'm afraid. It's ever so nice of you, but you seem a little bit frightened of the whole idea. The man I marry must be strong enough for both of us, so that if ever I need it he can be strong for me as well as himself. I expect you see what I mean. I'm so awfully sorry."

So was I. I could have cried because she was so decent about it. Suddenly it dawned on me what marriage meant, and then I turned perfectly cold with terror. Suppose Marjorie had just said "yes" and never explained. I might have made the most awful mess of her life.

She put out her hand to show we were still friends, and I squashed it horribly hard I'm afraid, but she never yelled or anything. Then we came to a turning, and I reined back to let her pass on.

"Thank you awfully for being so decent," I said. "P'r'aps you'd rather, in the circumstances, ride home alone? I can get back just as well this way."

"Thank you. P'r'aps I would," she answered with a grave little smile, and I saluted and cantered off.

I felt a bit of a wash-out that evening. The day after was like nothing on earth. You see, I really did love Marjorie, and when you love anyone like that you simply can't bear to be away from them. I went through it in those days, but I knew she was right. I could almost laugh, after she'd explained, at the idea of expecting a real girl to marry you if you were frightened out of your life to ask her. If only I could have done it over again!

The worst of it was I kept on meeting Marjorie at all sorts of places. I tried to be nice and like a brother, and not bother her, and I think she appreciated it, for she was a regular brick to me. But it's terrible to be near the girl you love and have to be a brother.

Finally some fool of a woman insisted on getting up a dance in aid of the Red Cross or something, and asked the regiment. Of course, I had to go, though I felt more like attending my own funeral. And, of course, Marjorie was asked, too, and accepted. The fool of a woman told me so.

"Miss Langston will be there," she purred to me. "Surely that's an inducement to you to come, isn't it?"

Marjorie did come. She came in a wonderful frock like a pink mist, and it suited her as well as her hunting kit. I had to ask her for a dance because we were friends. She looked at me thoughtfully; I could only tell myself how wonderfully her beautiful throat rose out of her beautiful shoulders.

Presently I found myself floating round

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

the room holding Marjorie very carefully. I was afraid of giving myself away. I didn't want her to know how much she meant to me. Our band was playing "Destiny," and my breath was sort of sobbing, and I was afraid Marjorie would hear.

She danced very perfectly, and she might have been made of marble.

"Let's sit out the next one," she said when the music stopped. "I'm tired. Find somewhere peaceful and get me an ice, please."

I found a little sort of screened-off recess—the dance was in the local Assembly Rooms—and got the ice—a pink one to match her frock. Marjorie sat eating it spoonful by spoonful as slowly as if the last would kill her, and she wanted to live. And as I watched her I wanted to die and knew I couldn't. Then a wild sort of mood came over me. I told myself if I couldn't have her for my very own, at least I might make the most of my few minutes. So because her shoulder seemed the whitest thing in the world I stooped and kissed it—just the piece outside the shoulder-strap, where the shoulder begins to be arm.

Marjorie's eyes blazed.

"Why exactly did you do that?" she asked in a sort of quiet fury. Being by then quite mad, I slid my left arm round her, tilted her chin with my right hand, and laughed.

"Because I'm not afraid now, Marjorie—I'm not afraid now," I explained. "I love you ten thousand times more than ever, and there's not the least hope for me, but I'm going to kiss you so that you'll know how little the man you do marry loves you compared with me."

So I kissed Marjorie ever so many times, and she began to shake, and the tears ran down her poor little face.

"Don't," she pleaded. "Don't—not like that. Not those dreadful, mad kisses. You see, I love you, too—only I couldn't tell you while you were afraid. And now I'm frightened of you, and I don't want to be."

Then I just gathered her up and held her, and we comforted one another. She told me she loved me ages before, and why she was so cold and conventional was in case I should see. She told me every girl wanted to be persuaded even if she really needs no persuasion, and what every girl hates most is for her man to be afraid even though it's beautiful and thrilly for him to be afraid of her, because he simply mustn't be afraid of anything. And we sat there all the rest of the evening and swapped confidences.

Later we crept out, and I wrapped my fur-lined coat round her over her own, and we found my car, and I drove her back under the stars to her own house. She lived there alone with the servants, now her father was on service.

We said good-night in the hall with just the firelight to light us. Last of all I kissed her eyelids and the little place between her eyebrows where a kiss is so peaceful.

"Just us two," she murmured dreamily. "Never lonely again! Isn't it a dear old world?"

And now you realise why, as I said in the beginning, I *am* going to get married.

I just gathered her up and held her, and we comforted one another. It was the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

For "Soldiers and Sailors Too"

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a sailor or soldier. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The O.C., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

A COMRADE IN ARMS.

He had only just enlisted and did not know the rules of the Army.

One day he was walking round barracks, and seeing the Officers' Mess thought he would have a look inside, so in he walked, found an easy chair and began to read the morning paper.

All of a sudden he was gripped by his collar and brought face to face with an officer.

"Look here my man," said the officer, "do you know where you are?"

"No," said the recruit.

"Well, this is private quarters."

"Shake hands, old sport," cried the private. "Pleased to meet you; I'm Private Brown."

GOOD ENOUGH FOR HIM.

Coming back on the leave boat last summer were several men who were comparing the various souvenirs they were bringing home. One man had a Hun helmet, another a shell-case, and so on. One man produced an old door-knob and when it was remarked that that wasn't much of a souvenir he replied:

"Well, it may not seem much to you chaps, but it means a lot to me, for it was like this: I was told off one day by the Captain of my Company to take a message to Headquarters, situated in a certain village half-a-mile away. On arriving there I was just going to pull open the door when a German shell blew the entire place to bits and left the door-knob in my hand. I guess that's a good enough souvenir for me!"

A FREE TRANSLATION.

It was in the boys' training establishment and the new signal class were listening with more or less attention to the meanings of the different flag signals. One rather lengthy explanation concluded with the words: "And the fleet will act as a whole in obeying it."

Later a paper was set before each boy to test his knowledge. When the papers were handed in, judge of the instructor's astonishment when he read in the paper from one intelligent youth dealing with this particular signal that "The fleet will act as a hole in a bayonet!"

TEN JOLLY SAILOR BOYS.

Ten jolly sailor boys
Went fishing for a mine;
One got a shade too close,
And then there were nine.

Nine jolly sailor boys
Were guarding Dover Strait;
One tried to swim back home,
And then there were eight.

Eight jolly sailor boys
Returned to sunny Devon;
Celebrations knocked one out,
And then there were seven.

Seven jolly sailor boys
So full of fun and tricks;
One overstepped the law,
And then there were six.

Six jolly sailor boys
For treasure went to dive;
A hungry fish grabbed one,
And then there were five.

Five jolly sailor boys
All British to the core;
One caught a "North Sea" chill,
And then there were four.

Four jolly sailor boys
Crept in the Baltic Sea;
Hostile "bing-bang" stopped one,
And then there were three.

Three jolly sailor boys
Partook of "galley" stew;
One got dyspepsia,
And then there were two.

Two jolly sailor boys
Each working at his gun;
Down came a German bomb,
And then there was one.

One jolly sailor boy
Said: "Now my mates are gone,
I'll join the Flying Corps,"
And so that left none.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Girls & Mr Gumblay

by F. E. Baily

I.—PRUNELLA.

Mr. Gumblay is a gentleman of wealth and leisure, who, invalided out of the Army, seeks to banish *ennui* by delicate intrusions into the realms of other people's romances. In strategy he has a master hand, as Prunella found to her joy when he undertook to bring the country doctor to an avowal of the love which only pride had prevented his confessing.

I.

Mr. Cyprian Gumblay (invalided) sat thoughtfully in his rooms in Half Moon Street smoking a cigarette and staring at the rain which drifted in great gusts past the windows. His thin, rather pale face and reflective eyes indicated at the moment a mixture of emotions. On the other side of the room his servant grappled with a varied collection of military kit, sorting and classifying. An air of packing up and departure pervaded the whole place.

Finally, the tall figure in immaculate tweeds shrugged his shoulders ever so slightly.

"Well," he observed, "I can at least do as I like and no man say me nay. I can read Browning in a cemetery or subscribe to foreign missions without pausing to think what effect it will have on the tone of the Army. Lucas, you may pack up all the souvenirs, the shell-cases and things, and have 'em stored."

"Very good, sir."

"On second thoughts, leave the shell-cases. With added muckings by perverted goldsmiths I daresay they'll come in handy as wedding-presents. At the moment I think the peace and quiet of the country wouldn't be a bad idea, Lucas."

"Very possibly so, sir. I think this tunic had better go to the cleaners, sir. It has several——"

"Hang the tunic—do what you like with it," said Mr. Gumblay peevishly. "You don't appear to understand my forlorn and unfortunate mental condition. London is a desert because I seem to have grown out of all the things I used to do with the people I used to know. What's the use of rackin' about in Cirage's or somewhere with a lot of fluffy girls now? It doesn't amuse me in the least."

"Perhaps the country would do you good, sir?" suggested Lucas, putting his master's own suggestion forward as a novelty with the naked effrontery of his class. "Shall I order the car for the morning, sir?"

"Yes, order the car for the morning," said Mr. Gumblay a little wearily. "The devil of it is I haven't the least idea where I want to go."

When a young man is but twenty-seven, passably good-looking, wealthy, and alone, enjoying in addition only delicate health, life is apt to take on a greyish tinge. For these reasons Mr. Gumblay gazed pettishly around his exceedingly desirable rooms, perfectly furnished, full of the pictures and other artistic trophies he had once delighted to collect.

"I used to play polo," he murmured, "but I can't at present, and, anyway, there isn't any polo. I am a decent shot, but who the blazes shoots nowadays? and, anyway, I should be wearied to death in an hour or two. All the decent chaps are out in France, and most of 'em gone, poor devils. I will *not* descend to pottering about semi-deserted golf links with two old men and a flapper for company, and cobwebs on every bottle in the club-house bar."

He picked up an A.B.C. and flicked over the pages listlessly till he came to the W's.

"Waterloo—Watford—Wivenhoe—Worcester. Oh, hang them. What's this? Wantling, Sussex, pop. 2,500. Somehow, I

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

like the sound of Wantling. I don't suppose it's a bit like what I imagine it to be, yet one can only try. Lucas, plot out the route to Wantling from the road books, and we shall start at ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Very good, sir."

"And I want to dress now. I'm dining out."

II.

Through the gathering twilight of a moist afternoon in late winter, Mr. Gumblay steered his 30 h.p. two-seater into the main street of Wantling. He crept along wistfully, for the place was such as brought rest to his soul. Wantling stood much as its faithful builders in honest labour raised it to the glory of God and good craftsmanship hundreds of years ago. He could have wept with joy over the old houses with their overhanging gables, their lichen-covered, tiled roofs and that complete detachment from modern trumperiness which is the privilege of ancient things. Moreover, the atmosphere of the place, its air of unshakable peace, stole gratefully over his rather jangled nerves.

Mr. Gumblay glided on spell-bound towards the "Rose and Crown," where he proposed to spend the night. And in the middle of the main street, as he drew up to avoid a couple of carts, a miracle happened so marvellously in keeping with the place that he almost held his breath.

Out of the twilight, small, dainty, with something quaintly mediæval about her costume, strayed a girl with a little mouse face and quiet eyes. The door of a gabled house opened to admit her, and she stood for a second in the doorway silhouetted against the light with a background of old oak and chintz. Then the door closed and hid her.

Mr. Gumblay sighed, let in his clutch, and progressed towards the "Rose and Crown," but there was melody in his soul and his artistic nature rejoiced.

"If only I can get a furnished house," he kept murmuring. "If only I can get one of those priceless old places with the original old oak stuff still there, it'll put ten years on to my life, or take them off, whichever way you like to look at it. Well, hope on, little heart. You deserve a bit of luck and you *may* get it."

They welcomed him at the "Rose and Crown" with English beef, English cheese, and English beer. He sat up long with the landlord over a tankard and a pipe. In the course of conversation it transpired that there was indeed one furnished house such as he longed for to let.

"You must see Miss Fairfax about it, sir, Miss Prunella Fairfax," said the landlord. "It do belong to her, left her by her father same as the one she lives in in High Street."

"Not by any chance the gabled one opposite the chemist's?" inquired Mr. Gumblay with suppressed excitement.

"The very same, sir, though how you should know I can't say. Leastways, that's the one she do live in."

"A happy accident enabled me to know," explained Mr. Gumblay, draining his final tankard. "Good-night, landlord. You have interested me very much."

As he sank to rest in the grateful accustomed embrace of lavender silk pyjamas, Mr. Gumblay murmured to himself:

"Cyprian, you are going to call on Miss Prunella Fairfax, who lives at Wayside, Wantling, Sussex. And yet they say that Art is dead. Or perhaps one might put it thus: 'Truth lives and all Art is truth,' or perhaps——"

But at this point Mr. Gumblay went to sleep.

When he called on Prunella towards four o'clock of the following afternoon she received him in her chintz drawing-room that occupied part of the overhanging gables of Wayside. Her gown of soft silk, vaguely reminiscent of Liberty, and Art-students' pinnies, yet very Prunella-ish in spite of it, harmonised gently with the tones of the apartment.

"Good afternoon," he began gently. "I have ventured to call on a matter of business, although it seems like sacrilege to talk of business in your beautiful, restful home. I want to ask if you will let me your other house."

"You must let me give you some tea first, if you don't mind ringing for it," said Prunella, and Mr. Gumblay sighed with relief. He had looked on Prunella as a rather picturesque ass, or, rather, he knew she was picturesque, and feared she might be an ass. But her voice dispelled the terror; it was an intelligent voice.

"Thank you," he murmured, and rang the bell, but what he really meant was "Thank God!"

An irreproachable maid brought Prunella's altogether delightful tea outfit. Mr. Gumblay's roaming eye noted the numerous books, the Ibsens, the poets, the enlightened French novelists in the original tongue, as she poured China tea into little eggshell cups. He took his portion respectfully, and handed bread-and-butter to Prunella.

"I don't know," she began, casting back suddenly in a woman's objectionable way to the original point. "You see, I'm not

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

He . . . handed bread-and-butter to Prunella. "I don't know," she began . . . "You see, I'm not very attracted to Wantling just now. You could have this house as it stands, for all I care. I've lost interest."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

very attracted to Wantling just now. You could have this house as it stands, for all I care. I've lost interest."

"That is very serious—almost wicked," exclaimed Mr. Gumblay, greatly shocked. "Why do you wish to go? What's the trouble?"

"It's an unhappy love affair, if you want to know. I s'pose I can tell you—one always confesses to strangers. The man lives here, and I simply can't go on meeting him every day."

"The man must be an imbecile—a Goth," snorted Mr. Gumblay.

"He isn't either—he's just a plain, obstinate, pig-headed lunatic. He has what he calls his principles and what he calls his ideas about women. He doesn't think I ought to work—I do a lot of the work my father used to do for his publishers—but really it's only silly pride because pr'aps I earn more than he does. As if a country doctor's life wasn't of far more use in the world than——"

She stopped abruptly. Mr. Gumblay set down his teacup.

"Ah! He's the doctor, is he? I generally find them good sorts, though a trifle inclined to dissect one for the good of the cause. I should like to meet him. Perhaps in any case you would let me your other house and stay here a little while to see me settled in, anyhow. Will you?"

"All right," she said at last. "Do you mind fixing it up with my solicitors? I simply can't haggle over my own tea-table. You can go in when you like, and I'll send you a decent housekeeper. And if you ask me to dinner I'll be very pleased to come."

"Thank you so much," murmured Mr. Gumblay, with his rather charming smile, getting up to go. "I shall ask you both, and you will have the annoyance of behaving nicely to one another. I thank you for my good tea. It has been so nice—the first real tea at home with a real girl I've had since the murder business began."

When he had gone Prunella sat looking into the fire for a long time.

"Of course he doesn't appeal to me so much as Jim," she said at last with a woman's pathetic faithfulness, "but I wish Jim had a little of his broadmindedness. I was a perfect beast to start with and he didn't care a bit. He looks rather rotten, too."

Now Jim was the doctor.

III.

"My dear Mortimer, it is jolly decent of you to come and dine with me," observed Mr. Gumblay a day or two later. "I daresay the meal will be one long predisposition to uric acid—overloaded with protein and deficient in carbo-hydrates or hydro-carbons—I never can remember which are which—but you know what a country pub is. Fortunately they have a respectable bottle of wine, and my own cigars are not too bad. I daresay we shall manage. What'll you have to rouse the jaded appetite. Sherry and bitters?"

The doctor, whose dinner clothes, though not of this year, were, unlike the mule, not without pride of ancestry, heaved man's faint dreamy sigh at the prospect of being done well, and nodded. He was a firm-chinned person of thirty-eight, looking almost elderly beside Mr. Gumblay's slender twenty-seven. But then an exacting country practice, a moderate income, and a hopeless passion leave their marks.

"Well, cheero!" he said mechanically, and drank. "I hope you feel better?"

"Yes, that tonic of yours is wonderful stuff," said Mr. Gumblay, who had poured it into an inoffensive ditch after making it perform the ceremony of introduction. "It'd put life into a corpse. I suppose there's no chance of getting a little rough shooting about here? I want to keep out of doors, and I like pottering along with a gun. By the way, I've taken a furnished house from a Miss Fairfax—Miss Prunella Fairfax. Do you know her?"

The doctor's face set hard, and his eyes looked major operations for a second.

"I am interested in what you say about Miss Fairfax. I know her quite well."

"A very charming girl indeed," replied Mr. Gumblay, helping his guest liberally to saddle of mutton. "I must give a little dinner party for a housewarming, and ask you both as you are old friends. I wonder she has never married. In a way it seems a pity; she struck me as a little lonely and self-centred; but, of course, she knows her own business best."

When the second bottle of Burgundy had flowed almost into eternity the doctor's rather grim, secretive mouth relaxed into the unaccustomed pastime of giving its owner away.

"Gumblay," he began in the half-shamefaced manner of one man laying bare some of his soul to another, "you are a decent chap if you don't mind my saying so, and hang it, I must tell someone. I'm in love with Prunella Fairfax, and I do honestly think she likes me. I believe it's why she wants to go away. You see, her father was a patient of mine, and I got to know Prunella very well through treating him. I daresay I let her see it too soon after her loss, though she has been very kind to me. Of course, girls are very difficult——"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The doctor drivelled on for ten minutes in the fatuous manner of self-contained men when they let themselves go. Mr. Gumblay nodded, and made monosyllabic comments when the doctor's breath failed periodically. Sympathy is a priceless gift, but it has its penalties.

"But," he said at length, "these difficulties are trifles. Is there no more serious obstacle? I gather, Mortimer, you have told Miss Fairfax you—er—are fond of her, and she has not refused you. Pardon me, but what more can you want?"

The doctor's mouth set again.

"No, I can't tell her because there is an obstacle as you've discovered. You're a clever devil, Gumblay. The fact is, she makes more money than I do, and I won't marry on those terms. After all, a husband is a husband. You can't be head of a house that's mostly someone else's."

Mr. Gumblay looked at his guest with eyebrows raised in faint disapproval.

"In love," he said dreamily, "there is no bargaining or setting oneself up on high. If you really loved this girl you would rejoice that she is better off than you, and would want her to remain so."

The doctor shook his head.

"That's all right in poetry books, but love's one thing and marriage another. Marriage is in its way an industry. There are questions of finance, administration, one's children, and so on. Now in any industrial affair the biggest shareholder has the last word. And if the husband can't decide these questions, which he is in many cases best fitted to understand—well, the position's hopeless. At any rate, it would be for me."

They talked long over coffee and liqueurs, but there was no convincing Prunella's admirer. Mr. Gumblay held forth on true love, becoming almost lyrical, since the subject appealed to him, and he spoke as an expert, but he could not convince his guest. Finally they parted, and Mr. Gumblay went to bed rather hopeless.

"Poor Prunella!" he murmured. "She is such a delicate, imaginative creature, and yet she falls in love with this Victorian survival. Well, I supposeNature knows best, but it seems to me rank cruelty on Nature's part."

IV.

In Mr. Gumblay's drawing-room at Sunrising Prunella sat, a beautiful little artistic poem, drinking tea and frowning thoughtfully into the fire. Mr. Gumblay, with hands spread out in deprecation, talked to her for her good. He was outlining the doctor's theories of marriage, and scorn crept into his voice.

"My dear Prunella," he ended, with the privilege of an old friend, "the thing's impossible. You can't marry him. It'll ruin your work. It's putting your mind into a strait-jacket. Nobody's got any right over someone else's mind, but Mortimer thinks he has rights over his wife's. That shows he's stupid, for no one in this world ever influenced a woman's mind. Now stupid people are simply the limit. They tire one so terribly."

"No," replied Prunella sadly, "he isn't stupid. He's an awfully clever doctor. Oh dear, I wish life wasn't such a tangle. I could always twist him round my little finger really—he's only a big child—but I can't marry him if he won't say he loves me, and he won't, Cyprian. He's as obstinate as anything. Look at his mouth."

Mr. Gumblay silently handed her the richest cakes. He came forward like a conqueror. His eyes shone.

"Prunella, leave it to me. The thing is utterly simple. As long as you are confident you can be happy with him—and you are the only person who knows—the rest is mere strategy, and strategy is one of my hobbies. Now, in the case of a person like Mortimer, the formula is anxiety and acute pity aroused by real or imaginary trouble occurring to the adored. Let me think a moment."

Silence reigned in the chintz and old oak room, something like Prunella's, but more masculine and solid.

Presently Mr. Gumblay lit a cigarette and began to pace up and down, hands clasped behind his back.

"I have it. I will ask you and Mortimer to dinner; you will accept and not arrive. We shall await you. I'll work on Mortimer's feelings, and then we'll ring up Wayside. Your maid will say you left three-quarters-of-an-hour ago on foot because you wanted a walk. (Heaven send us a fine evening!) I shall at once set forth in the car with Mortimer to search for you. Dinner will be at 7.30 precisely. We will discover you by happy chance in Starcross Lane and accidentally knock you down. I will pull up, and just as I'm stopping you can run against the near side wing and fall over. If you can't get Mortimer to tell you he loves you then—well, you deserve to be an old maid with a cat and a parrot."

"What utter rot!" exclaimed Prunella scornfully.

"It's cheap melodrama, but it's not rot. You have to suit the situation to the audience. Prunella, don't be silly. Can't you see how sensible I'm being?"

Mr. Gumblay sank into a chair, slightly flushed with enthusiasm and triumph. Prunella still stared into the fire.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Well," she said at last, "all people in love are fools, and one may as well be one sort of fool as another. But if the whole thing is a fizzle, Cyprian, out you go from this house and I leave for the United States by the next boat."

Mr. Gumblay handed her furs with a mixture of deference and esteem very attractive to a young woman.

"You may trust me," he asserted confidently. "Will next Thursday be convenient for you?"

Prunella nodded.

"Remember," she explained, a shade pitifully, "it may be amusing for you, but for me it—it isn't."

He pressed her hand gently.

"Good-bye," he said. "I know, and I understand, and I do wish you luck most awfully."

V.

Thursday evening saw Dr. Mortimer fidgeting up and down in Mr. Gumblay's smoke-room. In vain Mr. Gumblay pressed upon him cunning *aperitifs*, cigarettes, and cigars. Seven forty-five p.m. struck on the gong of a little silver clock, yet no Prunella had arrived. The thought of meeting her had filled the doctor with varied emotions. Now he could not understand why she refrained from coming. Was it because of him? Had her courage failed at the last moment? Had he said something? Had he done anything?

Mr. Gumblay moved quietly to the telephone.

"Eight seven, Wantling, please," he murmured. "Is that Wayside? Can I speak to Miss Fairfax, please? What? You are the maid speaking? Yes? Left home on foot at 7.15? Not returned home? Yes—thanks very much. No, there's no need for alarm. No, I shouldn't send for the policeman. Probably she has called somewhere on the way here. I will ring up again and let you know. Good-bye."

He turned with a grave face to the doctor.

"Mortimer," he exclaimed, "Miss Fairfax left home on foot at 7.15 to come here. She hasn't arrived. I fear something must have happened to her."

"Good Lord!" groaned the doctor, and his face was ashen.

Mr. Gumblay pressed the bell.

"Lucas, the car at once and our coats. We must search the neighbourhood," he went on, turning swiftly to the stricken lover. "Put that brandy flask in your pocket like a good chap. It may be needed."

For some reason or another the car only arrived ten minutes later. Mr. Gumblay himself took the wheel.

"These beastly lighting regulations are against us," he muttered savagely. "However, one must do one's best."

He swung out of the gate and began to drive slowly along the road, examining every inch of the ground. Fortunately Heaven had sent a fine night with no moon. Exactly as the church clock struck eight he turned into Starcross Lane. It was a possible route from Wayside to Sunrising.

"For God's sake go faster, Gumblay," implored the doctor. "She may be lying ill and helpless by the roadside somewhere. Look out, man! Ah!——"

He spoke too late. Mr. Gumblay flung on both brakes to avoid colliding with a girl looming shadowy through the dark. Unfortunately, the near-side wing caught her, and with a little scream she fell to the ground.

The doctor leapt out, followed by Mr. Gumblay, and picking up the motionless form carried it into the circle of light from the lamps.

"Good God, it's Prunella, and you may have killed her," he snarled. "If you have, Gumblay, I'll break every bone in your miserable body."

Prunella's eyelids fluttered back. Mr. Gumblay winked at her over the doctor's shoulder, knowing her to be unhurt, for he had run over people before.

"Put her in the car and give her some brandy," he suggested. "You don't want to perform a post mortem by the roadside. Sit beside her on the running board and we'll get back to Sunrising. Really, Miss Fairfax, I'm most dreadfully sorry. We were out looking for you. Dear me, most unfortunate."

Five minutes later Mr. Gumblay, murmuring vaguely, left them together in his drawing-room.

"Lucas," he observed, strolling out into the hall, "dinner in ten minutes, and bring me a whisky and soda. Oh, and ring up Miss Fairfax's maid and say Miss Fairfax has arrived."

In the drawing-room Prunella, slender and beautiful in a gossamer evening gown, lay by the fire on a Chesterfield with the doctor bending over her.

"Prunella," he whispered . . . "Prunella." Then affection carried him away altogether. "Prunella, I love you," he almost groaned. "I thought you were killed. I knew if you were the world would never be worth twopence to me again. Tell me how you came to be wandering out there alone, darling."

Prunella, with a warm glow of delicious utter satisfaction stealing over her, took up the leading part in the oldest play in the

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

world, the only part a woman cares anything about.

"Well," she began slowly, "you were so cross and—and impossible, and didn't like my working, and everything seemed all stodgy and beastly, and suddenly I felt I simply couldn't sit opposite you at dinner. And so I walked to spin out the time, and I kept feeling more and more I couldn't do it. And then my feet seemed to lead me away and I wandered

Prunella . . . lay by the fire on a Chesterfield with the doctor bending over her. "Prunella," he whispered . . . "Prunella."

and wandered, and then Cyp—Mr. Gumblay knocked me down in Starcross Lane. But I'm not a bit hurt, thank you."

She got up and moved across to the mantelpiece.

The doctor felt that she was walking out of his life again. She looked so cool and beautiful, and mistress of the situation.

He almost sprang after her.

"Prunella, did you hear me say 'I love you' just now? I do love you, Prunella, and you can work as much as you like. I'll be just a slave to you if you like as long as you'll marry me. I want you so, Prunella. I'm so lonely without you."

"Dear Jim," she murmured, and let herself be kissed with those trembling, overwrought, first kisses a woman never forgets.

Two months later Mr. Gumblay, at midnight in his smoking-room at Sunrising, inspected two possessions with lazy contentment. One was a new morning suit, the other a shell-case converted by a goldsmith into an elaborate claret jug.

"It is spring," he murmured, "and Prunella is going to be married. Some day I, too, shall be married in the spring. I feel sure she will be happy, because she is too clever not to be. But then women are so clever that I simply cannot explain the unhappy marriages one sees."

He drained his glass and sought his bed thoughtfully.

"Dear Prunella," he ended, and so fell asleep, conscious of a good deed well done.

A further episode in the career of Mr. Gumblay appears next month.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

Photo *Canadian Official Photographs.*

Two members of the Canadian Forces doing their washing. Such beaming countenances as these are seldom met with on washing-day!

CHEERFUL ON WASHING-DAY!

THE mention of washing-day does not tend to conjure up before one's eyes a vision of delight; on the contrary, it usually serves as a depressing reminder of a damp and steamy atmosphere, makeshift meals, and a general upsetting of the house and temper. Smiling faces on washing-day are the exception rather than the rule.

This pessimistic feeling, however, does not, seemingly, extend to our fighting men. Who could look more care-free than these dusky members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force? In spite of the fact that they, too, are suffering a washing-day, the effect on their tempers appears to be rather beneficial than otherwise.

Perhaps the fact that the washing is on a comparatively small scale has much to do with their cheerful countenances!

Photo *A. W. Cutler.*

Every day is washing-day in Sicily. This is a street in Palermo, festooned with clothing hung out to dry.

NOT A "PRIVATE VIEW!"

IN this country a day early in the week is usually selected for washing-day—probably in order to get it over and done with as soon as possible, so that the rest of the week may be faced with the soothing knowledge of an unpleasant duty accomplished. In Sicily, however, this point of view does not seem to occur to the ladies of the country, for "any time's washing-time," to take liberties with the words of a popular song.

Every day the washing of clothes is being done in some house, and the result of the labour is afterwards to be seen by anyone who cares to observe, for instead of the modest flapping about in the back garden which is the lot of English clothing, the Sicilian ladies hang their washing in the streets to dry.

Possibly a collection of garments of various colours festooned across the streets may give the neighbourhood a somewhat festive appearance; on the other hand, it is rather embarrassing to have all one's personal belongings pegged up in the full glare of the public eye—especially if they are not in a good state of repair!

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

GUARDING THE SWISS FRONTIER.

When speaking at a recently-held function, a Swiss Minister said: "All the sons of Switzerland have pledged themselves to shrink from nothing in their independence, and the frontier is guarded by a trusty Army against all comers."

The German and Swiss outposts are here seen on guard at the frontier line near Basel.

Photo *Photopress.*

The frontier line between Germany and Switzerland is being very carefully guarded against invasion. The German and Swiss outposts are here seen on duty on the frontier line near Basel, in Switzerland.

A SOUVENIR OF GALLIPOLI.

Many of our fighting men have, since the war, displayed hitherto undiscovered gifts for sketching, carving, and so forth. This pipe is a very beautiful example of wood-carving, and is the work of a sapper who served in Gallipoli during the present war. All the more credit is due to the artist for the fact that the carving was done with a pen-knife on an ordinary briar pipe, the bowl of which measures only 2 inches in length, and 1⅜ inches on the widest part.

Every scrap of space has been utilised, and the pipe bears, among many other decorations, the cap-badge of the R.N.D. Divisional Engineers—of which the carver is a member—the crest of the Corps, and also their motto, "*Per mare per terram*" ("By sea and land"). Surely a more unique souvenir of the fight for the Dardanelles would be difficult to find.

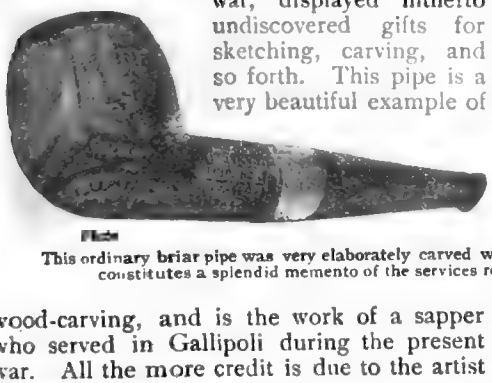


Photo *T. Harris.*

This ordinary briar pipe was very elaborately carved with a pen-knife by a sapper who served in Gallipoli, and constitutes a splendid memento of the services rendered by the Naval Division in the Dardanelles.

MOTORS THAT CLIMB STEPS.

The next best thing to possessing a "Tank" is to be the proud owner of a motor-car which has an accomplishment seldom found in motor-cars—that of climbing steps.

This feat is performed by the armoured cars supplied by a thoughtful Government to the Canadian troops. The cars were tested in the presence of General Sam Hughes, in Toronto, and came through with flying colours.

Photo *Photopress.*

The Canadian troops are supplied with armoured motor-cars which can climb steps. This feat was attempted before General Sam Hughes in Toronto, and was found easy of accomplishment.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Petticoat Influence

by Roy Vickers

" She will tend him, nurse him, mend him,
Air his linen, dry his tears;
Bless the thoughtful fates that send him
Such a wife to soothe his years! "

THE autumn day was drawing to a close—the first day of Constable Perkins' promotion—and a cluster of neighbours was assembled round Mrs. Perkins' doorstep to do proper honour to the hero's return from duty.

For John Perkins *was* a hero. His name had been in all the papers, his portrait in not a few. He had been complimented by the judge for his " remarkable astuteness " in the Granston murder case. With such a beginning everyone promised a distinguished career for him.

In due course his six foot of ponderous manhood turned the corner of Pretoria Gardens and strode valiantly down the middle of the narrow road, self-conscious in the glory of " plain clothes." At his approach the neighbours melted away with a chorus of " Evening, Mr. Perkins! " to which he answered nothing.

For John Perkins, being somewhat obtuse by nature, had come to believe in the myth of his own " remarkable astuteness." He had almost forgotten that his own share in the great *coup*, for which he had received all the credit, had been limited to the actual arrest of the murderer, his success being wholly due to the interference of his wife.

" They've put me on a case, Martha, first go off," he announced with pride as he entered his cottage and closed the door.

" And how soon do you reckon they'll be taking you off it? " demanded Mrs. Perkins, who had observed the pride.

While the inner meaning of the question was slowly penetrating her husband's head she busied herself with preparing the supper.

" And what sort of a case might it be that they've put *you* on to? " she asked later as they sat at table.

" I'm not denying that it's a small one, Martha," replied Perkins, a little less complacently. " But the Inspector says: ' Perkins, there's not much in it, but it'll give you a chance to show that the Granston business wasn't a bit of luck,' he says."

" Well? " demanded Mrs. Perkins, expecting particulars.

" I've got to go to the City at seven o'clock to-night and call on the head of a firm what's working for the Government," announced Perkins. " Case of stealing on the part of one of the clerks."

Mrs. Perkins digested the information in silence.

" It seems to me that if all you've got to do is to see him," she said at length, " you could do that just as well in your uniform and save the clean collar as you'll have to put on, which will be the second to-day."

" And what sort of an impression do you think I should make on him in uniform—and me a detective? " demanded Perkins.

" Don't you start trying to make impressions," warned Mrs. Perkins, " or you'll be back in the uniform a sight quicker than you bargain for. The best thing you can do if you want to make sure of those plain clothes is to listen carefully and keep your mouth shut."

With this eminently sane advice Detective

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"And what sort of a case might it be they've put *you* on to?" she asked later as they sat at table.

Perkins, duly furbished, was sent on his business fully half-an-hour before it was necessary for him to leave Pretoria Gardens.

Arrived at his destination, he was promptly shown into the office of the head of the firm.

"Are you the—er—Detective Perkins who sprang to fame over the Granston murder?" genially asked the head of Nevis and Blane, Ltd. The geniality was assumed to cover up the doubt which had suggested itself to Mr. Nevis as Perkins had been shown into his office.

"Yes, sir," answered Perkins proudly. "That was the case which gave me the chance to prove my mettle, as you might say."

"Ah, yes!" Mr. Nevis hesitated a moment, and then, telling himself that the man before him must have brains although they were not apparent, lowered his voice and plunged into his business.

"A very unpleasant incident has occurred in my office," he confided. "To be quite frank, a sum of £100 has mysteriously disappeared."

"I think I understand, sir," said Perkins sagely; "you mean that you think it's been stolen."

"I know it has been stolen," corrected Mr. Nevis, "and I want you to find the thief."

There was a pause, during which Perkins continued to look thoughtful. He knew that he ought to ask a number of questions, but could think of nothing.

"I can help you to this extent," continued Mr. Nevis. "I know for certain that it must be one of two clerks, who are the only people besides my partner and myself who have access to the cash of the firm. Both of them bear an excellent record, and I should be extremely reluctant to bring a false accusation."

Mr. Nevis waited for the questions, but as none came he went on.

"It was the merest accident that I discovered the shortage last night. Ordinarily I should have known nothing about it until next Monday, which, as you are probably aware, is quarter-day. And it has occurred to me that the guilty one will probably have made his arrangements to abscond between now and then. That is why I want you to start your investigations at once."

"What sort of chaps might they be, sir?" asked Perkins hopefully.

"Oh, much of a muchness!" replied Mr. Nevis. "Taft is twenty-nine, came here when he was fifteen. Bassett is a year younger. Service about the same. Both good men hitherto, or they wouldn't have attained their present position of trust—exempted by the tribunals on the ground of their indispensability. Both are earning twenty-five shillings a week."

Perhaps the big, open face of Perkins may

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

have indicated a faint surprise, for Mr. Nevis added :

"Why should they want more? They'd only spend it in the music-halls. Besides, they're both unmarried. I don't employ married men. I think you had better try Bassett first; he has often struck me as being the sort who might be fond of pleasure."

Before Perkins left the contractor summoned each of the suspects to his office on some small pretext, in order that the detective might study their faces.

At eight o'clock that night Perkins, acting upon the hint Mr. Nevis had given him, decided to commence by shadowing Bassett.

About eleven he returned to Pretoria Gardens, and, as was inevitable, related the details of the case to Mrs. Perkins.

"And you mean to say that old buffer really thinks that you're going to find the man who did it?" she demanded incredulously.

"Martha, I've as good as caught him already," replied Perkins impressively. "Why, I hadn't been shadowing that young fellow—Bassett, I mean—above half-an-hour before he bought one of them motor-cycling papers. Now what does a man on twenty-five bob a week want with motoring papers, I ask you?" he added, contracting one side of his face into a massive wink—as indicating his own profound cunning.

But Mrs. Perkins could have answered the question easily enough. She herself regularly perused the fashion article in the daily paper, although her own wardrobe was invariably replenished from the nearest dress exchange. She knew the feeling. But she contented herself by advising :

"I'd have a go at the other one to-morrow if I was you—if he hasn't hopped it already, that is."

"Well, you see, Martha, the time's getting very short," objected Perkins. "And I've got a sort of intuition that it's Bassett. Soon as I set eyes on him I sized him up as being fond of pleasure. It's ten to one he did it, so I think I'd better stick to him now I've started."

"Oh, well!" said Mrs. Perkins resignedly. "I don't suppose they'll sack you when they find you've mugged it up." And there for the time the discussion ended.

II.

Now, in all her numerous interferences, Mrs. Perkins used to proceed on the quite illogical but surprisingly effective principle that Perkins must be wrong. His selection of Bassett convinced her that Taft must be the guilty one. Wherefore, strictly in her husband's best interests, she waited until he had fallen asleep, and then, creeping out of bed and turning on the gas, rifled his pockets and studied his note-book.

The note-book yielded nothing of importance save the private address of Taft. But that, at the moment, was all Mrs. Perkins wanted.

On the following afternoon Mrs. Perkins set out for Taft's private address with no more definite object than that of having a look round. It took her a considerable time to find the out-of-the-way road in a Northern suburb. And when she finally arrived she thought at first that she was mistaken. For the house, a semi-detached villa, was empty; a house-agent's board with the legend "Sold" stood in the garden.

While Mrs. Perkins was still hesitating, a butcher's cart drove up to the next house.

"Half a minute, young man," said Mrs. Perkins, buttonholing the blue-coated driver. "Maybe you can tell me the name of the young fellow who used to live next door?"

"Let's see," said the man obligingly, "I did used to deliver there sometimes. Taft I think the name was."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Perkins expressively. "Well, I'm very much obliged to you, I'm sure."

"What — know anything about him?" asked the man interestedly.

"He'll find out what I know about him fast enough," replied Mrs. Perkins as she started to trudge back to the station.

When she reached the terminus, instead of going home she went to the offices of Messrs. Nevis and Blane.

It was by now nearly eight o'clock, and Perkins had taken up his stand on the opposite side of the road, preparatory to resuming his watch upon Bassett. His eyes were glued on the office exit so fixedly that a couple of errand boys, following his gaze, stood and stared with him. He was quite unconscious of his wife's presence until the point of her umbrella impressed itself upon the small of his back.

At the end of a couple of minutes of reluctant conversation Perkins leant down and whispered :

"That's Bassett just coming out. I'm off, Martha."

"No, you're not," replied Mrs. Perkins convincingly, as she took a firm grip of her husband's clothing in the region of his waist. "Not till you've shown me which is Taft, you're not."

"Leggo, Martha!" implored Perkins, as more than one passer-by turned to look at the luckless detective.

"You keep quiet and you'll be all right." Mrs. Perkins addressed him soothingly. "Now, you're not looking properly——"

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"There he is!" exclaimed Perkins, as a young man emerged from the office. Then, with a sigh of relief, he hurried off in the now vain pursuit of Bassett.

"Now we'll see if I can't do a bit of 'shadowing,'" mused Mrs. Perkins as she crossed the road and commenced to walk some twenty paces behind the young man who had been pointed out to her as Taft.

It was at this point that Mrs. Perkins realised that the art of shadowing, which she had always despised, was possessed of certain unsuspected difficulties. To mention one difficulty only, the young man was of slightly athletic tendencies and had a somewhat rapid stride. To prevent the twenty paces from becoming unduly elongated, Mrs. Perkins was compelled not only to run grave risks of "palpitations," but also to proceed along the crowded pathway in such a manner as to evoke alternate reproaches and cheers from the other pedestrians.

She waited until he had fallen asleep, and then, creeping out of bed and turning on the gas, rifled his pockets and studied his note-book.

It is probable that the chase—for such it had become—would have had to be abandoned had not the quarry himself unconsciously saved the situation by coming to a stop.

He came to a stop outside a big draper's shop, and stared so long into one of the windows displaying *lingerie* that Mrs. Perkins had time both to recover her breath and to comment inwardly on the oddity of his choice.

The young man seemed about to enter the shop. He stood for a moment irresolute in the doorway. Then, with a nervous glance round, he advanced to the door, retracted hastily, and then as hastily entered.

As he disappeared, Mrs. Perkins came and glanced at the contents of the window.

"He didn't ought to be looking at them things—and him a bachelor," she pronounced with marked disapproval.

For several minutes she waited uncomplainingly, glad of the respite. Then her attention was caught by a glass panel at the back of the shop window, which was being moved by an assistant. A moment later the assistant entered the window and deftly removed from a wax model a white, filmy petticoat ticketed at 14s. 11d.

Presently the young man emerged from the shop carrying a parcel under one arm. The deep flush, extending from the point of his chin to the tips of his ears, left no doubt in the mind of Mrs. Perkins as to what the parcel contained.

Mrs. Perkins, physical fatigue mingling with moral indignation, continued to follow him until he admitted himself to a dingy house in Bloomsbury, the windows of which exhibited an "Apartments" card. She waited

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

for a few minutes, undecided whether to ring the bell and to have it out with him there and then, when the young man came out again. He was still carrying the parcel—being about to take it to the post-office.

As soon as he had turned the corner Mrs. Perkins strode up to the door and rang the bell.

"Young fellow of the name of Taft live here?" she demanded peremptorily of the tousled landlady.

"Well, and what's it to you if he does?" was the unfriendly response.

"It's nothing to *me*," replied Mrs. Perkins. "I shan't get myself run in for harbouring a convicted felon same as what you will if you're not careful, ma'am."

"Convicted felon!" exclaimed the landlady, aghast. "You're not telling me that civil-spoken young gentleman——"

"Well, if he's not now he will be this time to-morrow," compromised Mrs. Perkins, "which is all the same as far as you're concerned, if it came to a matter of resisting the police in the discharge of their duty."

"But I'm not resisting the police as I know of," protested the other in bewilderment.

"All right, then," said Mrs. Perkins amiably, "maybe it's only your manner that's misleading, which some people is always like that and thinks all the time as they're being civil."

From a pocket in her cloak she produced one of her husband's newly-printed cards.

"That'll tell you who I am, ma'am, and save a lot of words. And now, if you mean what you says, I'll trouble you to show me into that young fellow's room before he comes back."

Uncertain, in popular parlance, whether she stood on her head or her heels, the landlady dumbly acceded to this demand. Once in the room Mrs. Perkins took in with a rapid glance all the unmistakable signs of a worried young man having attempted to pack his belongings.

"He gave notice this morning," explained the landlady. "Why he came here at all I don't know—he hasn't been here above a month."

Mrs. Perkins crossed the room and opened the door of a spacious cupboard. Finding nothing of interest inside it, she decided that her investigations were complete.

"Now there's no call for you to go worrying yourself," she said graciously. "I shall report that you've given me every assistance. And if you mind what I'm telling you now, I'll see they don't drag you into it."

"It—it isn't murder, is it?" asked the landlady in a horrified whisper.

"It's not for me to answer," replied Mrs. Perkins sententiously. "All you've got to do is to keep mum and watch him. If he starts cording them boxes you must let me know at once. See?"

And then, having given her address, Mrs. Perkins returned and related her discoveries to her husband.

III.

"There may be something in it, Martha," admitted Perkins reluctantly, as the account was finished. "But I can't go and arrest him to-morrow."

"And why not?" demanded Mrs. Perkins. "It's clear enough he took the money."

"Maybe," agreed Perkins. "But we've got to prove it. If we was to corner him and he confessed it, it would be all right. But he might have an answer ready."

For a moment Mrs. Perkins did not reply. She was thinking that if she knew for certain that Perkins had committed some misdemeanour, the fact that he had an answer ready would be little or no impediment to her in extracting a full confession. The same would doubtless apply to Taft. Presently she was ready with a plan.

As the result of the plan Perkins went to the suspect's lodgings about noon on the following day, which was a Saturday, and readily obtained the landlady's permission to conceal himself in the cupboard which Mrs. Perkins had observed on the previous night. With Perkins came the Inspector himself, who took up his stand in the road outside.

At about one o'clock Taft arrived. When the Inspector saw a woman enter the house immediately after the suspect he paid no particular attention to the fact, for Mrs. Perkins had not figured in the story which had been prepared for him.

Almost before Taft had closed the door of his room there sounded a peremptory knock. He opened it, and stared in surprise at Mrs. Perkins.

"H'm!" remarked Mrs. Perkins, as she invited herself to enter. "So it's a woman that's done for you, is it?"

"Really!" protested the young man dazedly. "I don't know who you are or what you allude to."

"It's her as you bought that petticoat for the other night at fourteen-and-eleven, I'm speaking of," explained Mrs. Perkins.

"You mean—my wife?" demanded Taft, more deeply bewildered than ever.

"H'm! Pretty sort of wife that a man has to spend more than half his wages for—buying a thing that any woman would know she

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

could get for three-and-six at the Bong Marchay, and wear better, what's more," retorted Mrs. Perkins in one breath. "And funny a man should be as fond of his wife as all that and not introduce her to his landlady."

"My wife is at present in a nursing home," said the young man quietly. "Though what my private affairs have to do with you I can't imagine."

Mrs. Perkins was secretly taken aback. His words had the unmistakable ring of truth. Nevertheless——

"So you manage to get the nursing home, *and* the petticoat, *and* these here lodgings in on your twenty-five bob a week?" she demanded.

Perhaps at this stage Taft began to perceive the drift of her questions, for his self-confidence seemed suddenly to have left him.

"If you must know, I—I have private money," he stammered.

"Yes, I know you have," replied Mrs. Perkins. "Only it isn't quite private enough, because your boss has found out where it came from."

"You don't understand——" protested Taft.

"I understand quite enough," interrupted Mrs. Perkins, "which is that you was all ready to hop it, come Monday, before your boss could go through his books."

At her words the young man dropped into a chair and covered his face with his hands. The half-packed boxes were a silent accusation.

"So you are a woman detective," he said bitterly. "And you have found me out. I congratulate you. You have ruined my life when all would have been well but for your interference. If I had been left alone until Monday I should have paid back the hundred pounds."

"That tale can keep company with the one about the wife," said Mrs. Perkins as she turned towards the cupboard for the purpose of summoning her husband.

"Whether you believe it or not," cried the young man with sudden intensity, "my wife is in a nursing home. It was for that—partly—that I took the money."

"Here, not so fast, young man," said Mrs. Perkins. As she spoke she turned the key in the cupboard door, effectively imprisoning her husband. "If you . . . put that money back on Monday, you won't be convicted of nothing." [*Page* 46, *col.* 1]

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mrs. Perkins hesitated. Instinctively she knew that Taft was speaking the truth.

"But you knew it was wrong to take your boss' money even if your wife was ill?"

"Oh, I knew it was wrong!" said the young man wretchedly. "But it was not quite as wrong as you supposed. I never for a moment meant to steal it. I knew that I could put the money back next Monday.

"A little over a month ago," he went on, "I decided I could stand the strain no longer. I determined to join the Army, as I wanted to do from the first. My wife heartily agreed with my wishes, whereupon I sold the little house and furniture which I inherited from my father, and then—my wife had to undergo an immediate operation. I wanted money at once, but although my property was actually sold there were formalities—agreements and things—and the agents told me that my cheque would not be ready before quarter-day. So I borrowed one hundred pounds from my employers—they don't know I'm married. It was enough to pay for the operation and a few things my wife wanted. I knew that I could put the money back on quarter-day. I was to join the Army on Monday—but now—I cannot prove my intention. I shall be convicted of—theft."

"Here, not so fast, young man," said Mrs. Perkins.

As she spoke she turned the key in the cupboard door, effectively imprisoning her husband.

"If you keep your word," she said solemnly, "and put that money back on Monday, you won't be convicted."

"But—surely you are bound to tell the police to arrest me?" asked Taft wonderingly.

"They won't want any telling if you don't hop it quick," replied Mrs. Perkins. "There's one of them in this cupboard" (as a fusillade of knocks sounded on the cupboard door) "and there's another one in the road out there. You'll have to go by the back door. You don't want your luggage. I'll have it sent on to your wife. You just hide yourself until Monday. Then you can pay the money and come back here with your head up—and don't forget to pay up, will you, else you'll be getting me into trouble?"

"And you really mean that you—will take my word?" gasped the young man.

"Aw! Get along, do!" snapped Mrs. Perkins. "I know well enough that a married man who could walk into a shop and buy a petticoat like that isn't a wrong 'un—he's just a fool."

* * * * *

On Monday night Mrs. Perkins waited eagerly for the return of her husband.

"Well?" she demanded before he was properly inside the cottage. "Did he send the money?"

"Yes," replied Perkins dully. "But it hasn't done me any good, Martha. They've—they've confirmed it—what the Inspector said on Saturday. They said that it wasn't my job to judge, and I ought to have arrested him. I—I'm dismissed the Force."

For a moment Mrs. Perkins did not reply. She was trying to think how they would manage without his weekly wage.

"Martha, what are we going to do?" asked her husband brokenly.

"Do?" she echoed boldly. "Why, you're going to get a brass plate first thing to-morrow and set up as a private detective. You've got the brains, haven't you?"

"Yes, Martha," replied Perkins doubtfully. "I've got the brains all right, only——"

"That's settled then," replied Mrs. Perkins as she hurried away to dish up the supper.

"SEND US THE 'ROYAL'!"

"You can imagine the eagerness with which the magazines from home are perused, especially magazines like the ROYAL, which usually portray some of the most beautiful faces in dear old England."

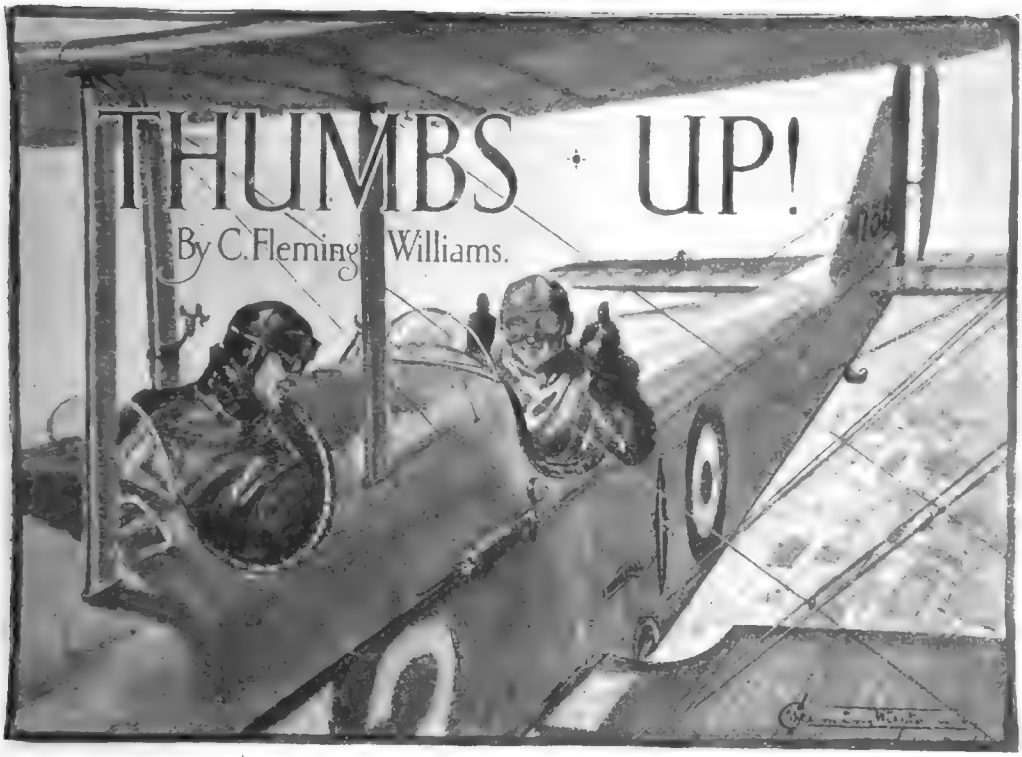
This is only one of the many appreciative comments of the fighting men who look to the ROYAL to cheer up their dull moments, and to you to see that they get it.

Your part is so simple. Just hand as many copies of the ROYAL as you can collect over the counter at any post-office, without wrapping of any kind, and they will be distributed among the troops to the very best advantage.

Remember Sir Douglas Haig himself wrote to urge all those at home who have been accustomed to buy books and magazines in the past to continue to do so freely, if possible in increasing numbers, and having read and enjoyed them to pass them on as freely for circulation among the troops.

"Tommy's" leisure is often of the spasmodic order, and that's why short stories and brief, breezy articles are the very thing for him. He will fight twice as well if he is in good spirits, so—well, it's up to you, isn't it?

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



Taking observations over the German lines from the doubtful sanctuary of a biplane is a task fraught with high adventure both to observer and pilot. The following graphic little sketch describes a typical experience of two intrepid flying-men who made a railway station their goal, and, having signified their presence in the usual manner, had a lively time returning to the British lines.

"You're on first patrol, sir!"

A grunt from the camp-bed.

"First patrol, sir; you're it, sir."

The brown Army rugs, partly covering a Jaegar sleeping-bag, show signs of animation.

"Here's your tea, sir. You've got twenty-seven minutes."

The blankets at one end of the bed become convulsed, and a tousled head of hair and one eye appear.

"I suppose you mean that you intend to make me get up?" The voice sounds like a voice "heard off," coming through three layers of bag.

"Your own instructions, sir."

"Yes, I believe I was in rather good form last night. All right! I'll get up and do the rotten patrol."

"Yes, sir. Will you wear your sweater or the waistcoat? Cold morning and some ground mist."

"Mason, you've got no tact. You want to get me out, and yet you suggest that it's going to be cold and beastly when I do, and your bally ground mist is probably a dense fog."

"No, sir—only a nice little white mist just to cover up all the nasty mess out there."

"Very well, I consent to rise under protest. Why the deuce I should have to get up at this ungodly hour just because the Kaiser couldn't get a hat big enough to fit his infernal head beats me! Waistcoat and my A.O.D. boots."

Skilfully the blankets are kicked down and a lanky figure in crumpled and soiled pyjamas deftly reaches the floor without bearing too much weight on the edge of a rather badly-designed camp-bed.

Only two persons would have identified him with the splendid-looking fellow portrayed on the inside of his Royal Aero Club pilot's certificate—the lady who made the woollen pyjamas he is wearing, and the lady who bought the pretty ones in his valise.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

By the time he has shaved, washed, and dressed, the resemblance is visible, almost to the naked eye.

The "aerodrome," a large-sized field recovering from a period of cultivation, looks particularly uninviting in the half light of the dawn. Everything is grey and sodden with the moisture of the ground mist. The canvas hangars resemble a group of elephants with creased and pitted skins.

The curtain doors of one of them opens and a machine is wheeled out—a biplane, with a four-bladed tractor air-screw, a nicely-proportioned body or fuselage, and a simple V-type under-carriage. Everything about her suggests speed. Wind resistance has been reduced to a minimum, everything is "stream-lined" or fish-shaped. Steel tubes are "stream-lined" with thin wood; the struts, looking very thick sideways and very thin from in front, are stream-line in section, and the very wires themselves are no longer round, but stream-line in section also. She is coloured a dirty brown, save for the interplane struts, which are bright yellow, being varnished spruce, and the gaudy tricolour target painted on the side of the fuselage, and red, white, and blue rudder.

An N.C.O. in leather coat and helmet, carrying two Lewis guns, approaches the pilot as he walks towards the machine.

"Morning, sir! Shall we try the guns? I've got thirty-forty-eight, the one you like, and a new one."

"Good! Let us repair to the Dump Hole."

Near one of the hangars is a square hole in the ground with an upstanding post at one end of it. One of the guns is mounted on the post, the muzzle pointed down into the hole, and a few rounds fired.

"Quite correct, sir."

A like performance is gone through with the other gun, which is also in good order. Meanwhile, the mechanic in charge of the aeroplane has started the engine up and accelerated it gradually, till at the end of a few minutes it is roaring at its best speed, the machine being prevented from moving forward by wooden chocks under the wheels. Evidently he is soon satisfied, for he switches off and stands to attention when the pilot returns.

"How is she, James?"

"Fine, sir. Steady as a rock at 1650."

There is a revolution counter on the dashboard of every aeroplane, and it is essential the reading should be a good one before the pilot dare venture aloft.

The pilot and observer climb into their seats, the mechanic puts his hand on the propeller ready to swing it to start the engine, two men hold the strings attached to the wooden chocks under the wheels, and another stands at the tail.

"Switch off, sir?" asks the mechanic.

"Switch off," answers the pilot. "Petrol on, air closed, suck in."

The mechanic twists the propeller round, which has the effect of pumping petrol vapour into the cylinders.

"Contact, sir?"

"Contact!" The mechanic swings the propeller vigorously this time, and the engine starts. After a further test of the engine, the pilot waves his hand, the chocks are pulled away, and the machine gathers speed. Soon she is roaring over the stubble at fifty miles an hour, and, without effort, leaves the ground after a hundred yards' run.

The morning air is very cold, so cold that the pilot takes two or three deep breaths, like a bather entering cold water; but, worse still, it is "bumpy."

"Bumps" are caused by differences of wind speed and temperature, and their effect on the machine is what a rough sea is to a boat, with these differences—on the sea you can see towering waves and the valleys between them, and know when to expect an upheaval or a downward plunge; on the sea there is some rhythm in the undulations—in the air, none. You can be flying in seemingly calm air, and suddenly meet an air wave as big as a Biscay roller, or be dropped into a hollow without having ridden a crest. All of which means much hard work for the pilot and bad language from the observer, especially as he is trying for a bull's-eye at a Hun.

The machine makes one or two circuits of the aerodrome and then heads for the lines. The mist is fast disappearing, and only hangs in lakes of grey-white in the lowest patches of ground.

The trenches are clearly defined. On that terrible land nothing lives. No trees, no buildings, no roads, no moving vehicles, no figures. In that land, given over to the worship of the God Gun, the living things can only live in graves, joined end to end for tortuous miles—open graves, until the God speaks. Then are they closed, and the worshippers rest.

Behind the Deadland, in the support trenches, a few ants are moving. Sinuous wisps of smoke rise from many field ovens and scratch bivouacs. The pilot, hurtling through the stinging air, sees pictures of crisp slices of bacon curling in a joyous bubble of smoking fat, succulent kidneys perfuming the ecstatic breeze. Those devils below are about to distend their tunics, and just because the Kaiser had trouble with his hat he himself

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The story goes that at one particular part of the line our pilots made such a habit of testing their guns into the German trenches that one day a notice-board was pushed up over the parapet with the pathetic legend: "For God's sake, give your pilots a rest!" [*Page 50, col. 1.*]

must needs glue his eye on the jumping instrument board and waggle the joy-stick, for the purpose of preventing an "Archibald" crew from getting too fat.

Then his eye travels to his gun. Ye gods, why shouldn't the rotten ants have a bit of lead to aid digestion?

He moves the control lever from side to side quickly, and the machine shudders. The observer turns round to see what he wants, knowing it to be a signal.

The pilot clenches one fist and shakes it at the figures below and then smacks his gun. The N.C.O. laughs and nods.

There is much too much noise from engine, whirling propeller, singing cables, and roaring wind to make conversation possible, so signs are used—simple, obvious ones.

The pilot throttles his engine, points his nose down, and dives for the frizzling frying-pan. At 500 feet he opens up and flattens. Figures run about, most of them bolting like grey rabbits to their funk-holes, a few remaining to pull a trigger at this swooping hawk.

The Lewis snaps out its stuttering ragtime, and more than one piece of lead finds a home where the sausages do rest.

The Bosch has a great hatred of being fired at from above, and its moral effect is very great. There is a story of one part of the line where our pilots made such a habit of

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

testing their guns into the German trenches that one day a notice-board was pushed up over the parapet with the pathetic legend: "For God's sake, give your pilots a rest!"

The pilot, feeling much more reconciled to the world in general, turns over his own territory and commences to climb again. When a safe height is reached, he heads once again for the goal his observer wishes to investigate, and sets himself to get the utmost from the machine. At the end of twenty minutes the observer points downwards. Ten thousand feet below, looking like a symmetrically-marked octopus with outflung tentacles, lies an important town occupied by the enemy; the long, sinuous tentacles are roads and railway lines, and the number of them signify the strategical importance of the town. This place needs watching with a vigilant eye; any advance of the Hun is foreshadowed here by a visible liveliness on road or rail. The N.C.O. waves his hand round his head, and the pilot acknowledges by making the machine tremble, and then commences to circle round so that the observer can make a complete report.

He scans the chief railway station very carefully, and then turns to the pilot, rubs his hands, and holds up ten fingers. The pilot makes the machine pitch to nod approval. Ten fingers means that ten trains are visible in and about the station—an abnormal number, and speaking clearly of some big movement on hand. The N.C.O. asks by signs if it be worth while tickling them up with a bomb. Conscious of the fact that, snugly tucked under the fuselage of his machine, there rests a nice bomb of terrific power, the pilot acquiesces by putting the machine into a sickening dive and shutting off the engine.

There is something appallingly exhilarating about a nose dive. The roar of the engine has ceased, to be replaced by the more musical yet more awful roar of the wind tearing past the wires and struts at nearly twice the speed of a hurricane.

The pilot glances at the air-speed indicator, which registers the dizzy speed of 143 miles per hour. "Some hustle!" he chuckles. "Blast the bomb-sight! I'm not going to risk a miss. No dropping for me; I'm going to *put* the confounded thing right there."

Down and down, almost vertically, he plunges, straight for the cluster of rolling-stock. Down, still down, till the observer turns round to make sure his pilot has not lost control. A row of white teeth flash for a second behind goggles and face-mask, and he knows his companion is still cheerful and self-possessed.

Down, down, 1000 feet, 600 feet; then a careful straighten-out just before the objective is reached. A lever is pulled, and "tinned" death leaps from its leash.

Men can be seen running in all directions, steam spurts from the engines — but too late.

A great cloud rises from among them, and through it fly myriads of little black bits, rising higher and higher, to stop and then to fall like a shower of dirty rain. Just dirty rain—once a high-powered locomotive, cunningly wrought carriages, and a well-built railway station. Many, many of the rain drops were red, but blood spilt to bring the red back to some Belgian lassie's cheek justifies and even sanctifies red rain.

The signs of liveliness at L—— station are enough to warrant the pilot returning immediately to make a report.

He swings the machine on to a "bank" and turns sharply for home, praying hard all the time that "Archie" will not get him before he has time to climb again to a safer height. The luck holds. Not till he has got to 5000 feet do the Germans start their unpleasant attentions, and, fortunately, they are evidently still suffering from the effects of the "night before," and shoot wild.

At last, with a fervent sigh of relief, the N.C.O. makes out the front line trenches in the distance ahead. There is no more welcome sight on earth to those who take the air over enemy country than this winding line of tumbled earth. It means that, even if the engine should fail now, it will be possible to glide down into friendly territory. The whole of the time a pilot is flying over Hun ground, at the back of his mind is this constant dread that his engine may let him down.

The observer turns round to smile and indicate his discovery, when his eye catches something above and behind him. The pilot sees his look of dismay and turns also.

A Fokker monoplane, falling vertically like a monster hawk, is swooping for them.

She had been sent up to watch for their return, and, climbing up to 15,000 feet, had hung about, waiting, waiting for the death dive. That is the way of a Fokker—just one awful dive at the tail of a machine, firing as she passes close and continuing her dive till well out of range. She never returns to fight again if her shots should miss—it is sometimes unnecessary to return. There are two ways to avoid such an attack, if spotted in time.

It is perhaps inadvisable to describe them in detail as it might be the means of teaching

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

an uninitiated Hun; so let it suffice to say that the pilot chooses one of them, and eventually places his machine in such a position that s.e loses weigh, or to use the correct term, "stalls".

Meanwhile, the Fokker has continued her mad career, and drops past the English machine at the moment when she is about to commence a nose dive, so that all the German has to shoot at is the underside of a machine travelling in the same direction as himself, but momentarily much slower. Most of his bullets hit the armoured seats, or pass wide and do no damage.

Normally a Fokker can out-dive most machines. Knowing this, the Englishman decides to take a big risk. Instead of throttling his engine, he keeps it to add to the pull of gravity, getting a tremendous acceleration thereby. Round screams the propeller, and the revolution-counter begins to tell a horrible tale.

Just at the right second—at the very second before his protesting crankshaft throws its pistons out through the cylinder heads—he cuts out his engine. But it has been enough to enable him to equal the mad dive of the Hun, who realises fully the logic of the manœuvre when he finds the biplane immediately behind him, "sitting on his tail" in such a position that he is utterly powerless.

His gun is a fixed one, mounted to fire ahead through his propeller, and, twist and turn as he likes, always the terrible Englishman is sitting behind him.

Then the N.C.O. gets busy with his Lewis. He empties half a drum, and then the gun jams. Cursing, he reaches back for the other one, grabs it, and, without waiting to swing it into its mounting, fires it from his shoulder.

The man in the Fokker suddenly falls forward into his controls, and the machine commences to spin round and round in a smoke-trailed spiral.

The pilot of the biplane slowly flattens his machine, then vigorously shakes his controls. The N.C.O. turns at the signal. He sees a masked figure with both arms held up, hands closed, and two gloved thumbs pointing vertically!

LOUDER THAN WORDS.

Standin' in the doorway like a picture in a frame,
Jennifer was smilin' sweet when by young Jerry came;
He felt his heart stand still a bit, his face turned all to flame,
But what could the poor lad do?

Of'en by the cottage Jerry went an' came again,
He couldn' find no other way to ease him of his pain;
He only had hisself to give, an' he was poor an' plain,
So what could the poor lad do?

One whisht day he passed along when rain was pourin' down;
Jennifer was peepin' out, an' said: "You'm like to drown;
Won't 'ee step inside a bit, an' won't 'ee sit 'ee down?"
An' what could the poor lad do?

Jerry wished the rain would last, an' him not have to go;
Jenny said: "'Tis holdin' off—like someone else I know" . . .
Words was useless after that, actions had to show—
Well, what could the poor lad do?

Bernard Moore.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

CAP & BELLS

A PSALM OF PSOAP.

All honour to the publicans
  Who bleed me for the State;
Their steadfastness is wonderful,
  My fortitude is great.
All honour to the M.'s of P.
  Who fill our souls with hope
But bully for the chemist bloke
  Who merchants me my soap.

He yanks it from his scented store
  So skilfully and slick,
The superfatted toilet kind,
  The creamy shaving stick,
The soap in bowls of maple-wood
  Most seemly for the bath—
To smear himself withal a man
  May barter all he hath!

Now glory to our gracious King,
  And eke the Prince of Wales,
A murrain fall on Hindenburg
  And make him food for snails,
Uncomfy may the Kaiser hang
  (And I will buy the rope),
But bully for the chemist bloke
  Who merchants me my soap!

F. E. B.

THE FATAL MOMENT.

"But, Bertha, how did you make the acquaintance of your second husband?"

"It was quite romantic. I was out walking with my first when my second came along in a motor-car and ran him down. That was the beginning of our friendship."

IMPLICIT OBEDIENCE.

"Why did you let him get away from you?" thundered the chief to the "special."

"He—er took a mean advantage of me. He ran across the grass in the park, and——"

"Well?"

"Well, there was a sign there, 'Keep off the gra s.'"

A CASE FOR SPEED.

"Sir," said the young man, entering the office, "I sent you a communication yesterday!"

"Well?" asked the grim-faced man.

"Well, Mr. Prater, I thought perhaps you might give me a reply to my reque t, and——"

"Wait a minute," said Mr. Prater. "Are you the man that sent this account for £10 for hats for my daughter?"

"No, sir. I——"

"Then you are the one that left this bill for £50 for her dresses?"

"No, sir. My commu——"

"Then it must be this for £7 for shoes——"

"No, sir. My note was one asking if I might have your daughter's hand."

"You want to marry her?" gasped Mr. Prater. Then, turning over the pile of bills, he urged: "Take her, young man! I don't know your name, but take her quickly! She's talking about doing some more shopping!"

RING OFF!

"I am afraid it won't fit," she said as she tried the ring.

"That's funny," he mused; "I never had any trouble with it bef re."

SARCASTIC NEIGHBOUR: "That's 'ow you do 'em in these parts, is it?"

WASHERWOMAN (indignantly): "Yes. 'Ow do you do 'em, pray?"

SARCASTIC NEIGHBOUR: "We always wash 'em afore we 'ang 'em out."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

My Novelette.

Dear mother takes "The Daily Drone"
(I'm sure I don't know why);
My sister, Maud, "The Lover's Own,"
and reads it on the sly;
My brother, who's just bought a bike,
devours "The Scorcher's Pet"—
While I declare there's nothing like
"The Nonesuch Novelette."

For there, in nearly every part, you'll see
how some sweet girl
Contrives to win the hand and heart of
baronet or earl;
Or read (in smallish type) how she whose
birth was counted mean,
Turns out, in the last chapter, to be Lady
Geraldine.

What though *I* mayn't be wooed and won
by swains of high degree?
To read just how it *should* be done is
worth a lot to me.
But still (I hope it's not a sin) I cannot
but regret
Life's not more like the stories in "The
Nonesuch Novelette."

Ada Leonora Harris.

TOO MUCH TO ASK.

A well-dressed lady having given the signal that she desired to alight, the tramcar was brought to a stop, but it happened that the rear step was directly over a small puddle. The lady looked an instant, and then asked:

"How do you think I can get off here?"

The conductor replied:

"I cannot tell you, madam, but I do know that we can't wait until that puddle dries up."

A WILLING UNDERSTUDY.

Several Jack Tars, being on leave, visited a circus and secured seats in the front row. During the performance a charming young lady lion-tamer in the lions' cage beckoned to a savage-looking lion, which came forward and took a piece of sugar from her lips.

"Why, I could do that trick," exclaimed one of the sailors, loudly.

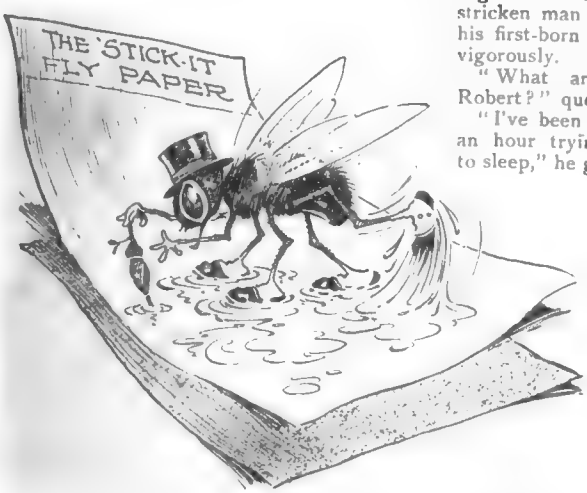
"Oh!" replied the fair one, turning round. "Could you really?"

"You bet your sweet life," said the sailor jauntily. "Just as well as the lion."

WHAT DID SHE KNOW?

At an evening party the hostess had coaxed a protesting guest to sing. After the song she went up to him, smiling.

"Oh, Mr. Jenkins," she said, "you must never tell me again that you can't sing—I know now!"



CHARLIE BUZZER (stuck fast on a fly-paper): "Well, anyhow, my wife was wrong when she said I couldn't stick to anything for long!"

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In the absence of a country vicar, another clergyman undertook his work.

On the first Sunday morning a dull-looking individual came into the vestry and began ramblingly to tell the stranger what he ought and ought not to do.

"Pardon me, sir," said the clergyman courteously, "may I ask what precisely is your position here?"

The other smiled vacantly for a moment. Then he answered:

"Well, sir, some folks call me a sextant, and others says as I'm a beetle. But our passon 'e usually calls me a virgin."

CAUGHT!

The husband arrived home much later than usual "from the office." He took off his boots and stole into the bedroom; but, vain precaution! His wife began to stir. Quickly the panic-stricken man went to the cradle of his first-born and began to rock it vigorously.

"What are you doing there, Robert?" queried his wife.

"I've been sitting here for nearly an hour trying to get this baby to sleep," he growled.

"Why, Robert, I've got him here in bed with me," said his wife.

AN EXCELLENT REASON.

"I'd like to exchange this book," said the man who had made the purchase two days before.

"Why?" asked the bookseller.

"Because I've finished reading it."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR.

CURATE: "What are you running for, sonny?"

BOY: "I'm tryin' to keep two fellers from fightin'."

CURATE: "Who are the fellows?"

BOY: "Bill Perkins over there and me!"

TAKING PRECAUTIONS.

Wullie MacWyllie attended a christening where the hospitality of the host knew no bounds. In the midst of the celebration Mr. MacWyllie rose up and made the rounds of the company, bidding each a profound farewell.

"But, Wullie, mon," objected the host, "ye're not goin' yet, with the evening just stairted?"

"Nay," said the unspeakable Wullie, "I'm no' goin' yet. But I'm tellin' ye good-night while I know ye all."

OUT OF HIS DEPTH.

A gentleman on a visit to London had been commissioned to buy a blouse at a bargain sale which his wife was unable to attend. The task was a novel one, but he finally secured the attention of a saleswoman.

"I want to buy a blouse for a lady," he said.

"What bust?" she asked.

He glanced around with nervous apprehension.

"Why—er—I didn't hear anything."

PRECISELY.

ELDERLY LADY (to guard at station): "Which train do I want to take?"

POLITE RAILWAY MAN: "You will pardon me, madam, for answering your question with another, but the solution of the proposition depends to a somewhat broad extent, on where you want to go."

THREE-YEAR-OLD (to exhausted parent): "Now, Daddy, I'm going to let you play by yourself."

"THIS LITTLE PIG—"

NEW RECTOR: "My good man, in war-time don't you think you'd be better employed keeping some more useful animal than a dog—say a pig?"

JARVIS: "Ay, an' a nice fool I'd look goin' rattin' wi' a pig!"

AN OVERFLOW MEETING.

A Mormon's wife, coming downstairs one morning, met the physician who was attending her husband.

"Is he very ill?" she asked anxiously.

"He is," replied the physician. "I fear the end is not far off."

"Do you think?" she asked hesitatingly—"do you think it proper that I should be at his bedside during his last moments?"

"Yes. But I advise you to hurry, madam. The best places are already being taken."

ENTIRELY SUCCESSFUL.

Hearing a faint rustle in the dark hall below, the elder sister, supposing the young man had gone, leant over the balustrade and called out:

"Well, Bessie, have you landed him?"

There was a deep sepulchral silence for some moments. It was broken by the hesitating, constrained voice of the young man:

"She has."

NO COMPLAINTS!

"Supposing I give you your supper," said the tired-looking woman, "what will you do to earn it?"

"Madam," said Tired Tim, "I'll give you the opportunity of seein' a man go through a whole meal without finding fault with a single thing."

The woman thought for a moment, and then told him to come in and she'd set the table.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

LADY OF THE HOUSE: "You say you're an old soldier. Have you been to the Front?"

TRAMP: "Yes, lady, but I couldn't make anyone 'ear, so come round the back."

Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Waking up Wistaria

By Dorothy Rose.

"All who joy would win
Must share it—Happiness was born a twin."

I.

"Yes, she's a deuced pretty girl, but you're quite right—she does want waking up!"

Lieutenant Claude Carruthers regarded the girl in the front row of the Beauty Chorus with undisguised approval on his bronzed face. *Cut Along!* had enrolled London's loveliest beneath its banner, and Wistaria Wayne was up to standard in every respect. Claude Carruthers, recuperating slowly after a severe shrapnel wound, combined with a nervous breakdown, had been the round of the revues, and remained unmoved before the powdered attractions of obtrusively decorative damsels. To him it was refreshing to find a girl who looked serenely across the footlights with no suspicion of self-consciousness. He had noticed Wistaria before Guy Hunter, whose shows at the Jester Theatre were the finest in town, pointed her out, and commented on what he termed "her want of ginger."

She had bronze-gold hair that fell in a thick wave across her forehead, an oval face, and a beautiful mouth, wistful and appealing as a child's. Her eyes were amber-clear, and full of a sweet serenity; there was an unstudied grace about her movements that set her apart from the studied curvettings of her companions. To Claude she seemed like a snowdrop among hot-house flowers, an effect heightened by her white frock and the tender green silk stockings that encased her slim legs.

"She's the very girl I want to play lead in my new musical comedy, *The Girl of Yesterday*," said Hunter. "Got just the right style—she'd look the part of Lavender to the life. Her voice is top-hole—notice that bit of a solo she had just now? She dances perfectly as far as technique goes, but she doesn't let herself go, and Lavender makes things hum in the third scene."

"Probably if you offered her the part, the shock would wake her up most effectually," suggested Claude.

"Doubt it!" Hunter moved restlessly in his seat. "Material things won't do it. If she'd fall in love now—Jove! if I were ten years younger I'd wake the slumbering woman in her myself. Chance for you, old man!" he added, furtively regarding his companion's strong, well-cut features.

For a moment Claude started, and a quick frown stirred his expressive face. Then the desire for an introduction, the craving to know more of the girl, who seemed so out of her element in that exotic throng, overcame his scruples. After all, why not? He had no near relatives, no girl friends, and all his chums were absent on active service.

"Can you manage an introduction?" he asked, his clear, grey eyes acquitting him of any motive but that of youthful interest.

"Easily!" Guy Hunter's rather saturnine face glowed with sudden gratitude. "If anyone can wake the kid up, you can. That quiet way of yours always goes down with the women, bless 'em!"

"I don't know if I can do it"—Lieutenant Carruthers' lips curved into resolute lines—"but I'll have a thundering good try."

II.

To Claude's delight, Wistaria was fully as attractive off the stage as she was on it, her freshness just as apparent, her unstudied grace of movement every whit as delightful. He found her intelligent, a little aloof, but

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

wholly appreciative. More retiring than most of her class, she had not enjoyed a surfeit of attention—to be taken out to tea and lunch by a handsome, deferential cavalier had all the attraction of novelty.

"You look like the Blue Bird of happiness," he told her when she met him one day in a discreetly short coat-frock that echoed the tint of early bluebells, and a blue velvet hat a-tilt on her bronze-gold hair.

And Wistaria smiled, her charming, aloof little smile, that made Claude long to kiss her or shake her into responsiveness. Not that she was ungrateful—she thanked him prettily for all his attentions: the chocolates and roses, the motor drives and lunches—but there was no exuberance, no waking of the slumbering fires in the sweet serenity of her eyes, no quickening of the elusive smile which seemed to embrace the whole world, and was assuredly not for him alone.

Claude had exhausted without effect the recognised manœuvres possible to a man of his breeding and calibre in winning the regard of a charming girl; it was the purest chance that showed him her vulnerable spot, the chord in her nature that responded where all others remained mute.

Spring came early that year, and Claude, weary of bricks and mortar, set his green car towards the country and, with Wistaria at his side, sought pastures new amid the amethyst hills and tawny moors of Surrey.

As they slid out into the open country Claude had more leisure to observe his companion. There was a subdued exaltation about her, as though the youth in her responded to the waking life of the countryside; her eyes were dewy with happiness; there was a rapt, intense look about her which all the delights of town had never called forth. Claude, with the understanding which was one of his most charming traits, was sympathetically silent.

Revelation came to him when they paused and alighted on the outskirts of a tiny copse, a-flutter with delicate spring greenery. Sunlight filtered between the trees; the grass showed jade-green patches on the russet ground; the primroses clustered dimly yellow at the foot of the ebony tree-trunks. Claude turned from a search for the luncheon basket to see Wistaria standing motionless, her eyes fixed as though spellbound on the miracle before her.

"Worth coming to see, isn't it?" Claude felt it almost sacrilege to break the silence. He never forgot the awakened glory in the face she turned to him.

"*It's* too beautiful to talk about," she said *faintly*, the colour deepening in her rounded cheeks.

They lunched on the edge of the wood, Wistaria talkative and gay as she had never been before. She glowed and sparkled; her eyes danced with animation; her laugh rippled out silver-clear on the still, warm air. In this new guise Claude found her doubly enchanting. By a miracle he had found the magic key that would open the secret doors of her nature, and stood now on the threshold of fresh discoveries which for him had all the attraction of mystery.

"I never expected you to enjoy it like this," he said, as she sat with chin propped between her hands, her eyes fixed in rapturous appreciation on the brook which girdled the wood like a silver ribbon.

"No; you thought chocolates were more in my line than primroses? Confess! It never occurred to you that a member of the Beauty Chorus would prefer blue skies and green fields to the gilt and garishness of smart restaurants. Now, did it?"

"I can't say it did." Claude's steady grey eyes met hers in frank confession. "I thought your ambition was to play lead in revue or musical comedy; I am beginning to think you have leanings towards sunbonnets and the simple life."

"I have. The stage is a means to an end. I had to do something, and it promised at least variety. I do want to do well in 'the profession,' not because I care for the admiration and worldly advantages, but because it would mean more money, and money would mean freedom—freedom to live my own life in the country, away from the stifling atmosphere of town."

"You are an astonishing young person." Claude rallied her gently. She had taken off her motor-coat, and in her leaf-green sports coat, that exactly matched her skirt, looked deliciously young and appealing. "A stage beauty and a wood-nymph—the combination is bewildering."

"Is it?" Wistaria pushed back the heavy wave of golden-brown hair from her forehead and laughed provocatively. "I am a wood-nymph at heart—always. Do you know what I want? A white cottage among the hills, a garden where wallflowers herald the spring and shaggy chrysanthemums bloom in autumn. I want to sit by my own log fire in winter, and hear the birds singing in my own lilac bushes in summer. I want a little place all chintz and oak, and——" She broke off abruptly. "You'll think me an awful idiot," she said wistfully, "but I'm saving up even now to get a week-end cottage in the country. I've got two tray-cloths and a blue teapot already."

"Splendid!" Claude smiled indulgently as he rose to his feet and stood for a moment

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

looking down at the girl's upturned face aglow with eager enthusiasm.

"I'm just going to the village for some cigarettes," he said. "You don't mind? and I'll see what they can do at the inn in the way of tea."

"Righto!" Wistaria nodded gaily and watched his tall figure reflectively. "He *is* a dear," she murmured to herself. "He always understands so beautifully."

It was half-an-hour before Claude returned and, skirting the wood, came back to the spot where he had left Wistaria and the lunch-basket. The basket was there, but—a peal of laughter fell upon his ears, and he turned to see Wistaria, her feet bare, her skirt gathered about her, ankle-deep in the brook. With her hair falling about her shoulders in masses of coppery gold, her dainty chin tilted back, her lips parted, she looked like some delicious, elusive wood-nymph.

"I didn't think you'd be back yet," she confessed; and Claude gave thanks for the delightful unconsciousness that saved her from all embarrassment. "It looked so gloriously cool, and the pebbles are quite smooth. It's such fun to take your hair down and play at being young again."

Claude threw back his shapely head and roared.

"It must be—especially when your youth is so very remote. You look quite fifteen, you know. You'll be getting *passée* soon!"

"Now you're teasing," pouted the girl as she waded ashore and sat down on a fallen tree-trunk to dry her feet. "Have you really a spare hanky? Men *are* useful at times."

"Aren't they?" he assented warmly as he handed her her stockings.

"They're not even real silk," she remarked plaintively as she took them from him. "I can't indulge in dreams *and* silk stockings, and I want my cottage more than I do finery, though the other girls think me a simpleton for it."

"Never mind *them!*" Claude returned. "I'll tell you a secret. I'm looking out for a cottage, too—somewhere I can stow my belongings and loaf and potter till I'm fit for service again."

"How splendid!" Wistaria was all interest in a moment. "But you have the advantage—your shekels are ready—you haven't got to wait until you've pinched and scraped. I won't take the cottage till I can pay a year's rent in advance and furnish it properly. I should never have a moment's peace."

"Straight little pal!" Claude grasped her hand and helped her to her feet. "Now for the village and tea. Perhaps we may even find the white cottage you've set your heart on. Who knows?"

They *did* find it, a little five-roomed place called Maple Cottage, with white walls and leaded panes that seemed to blink invitingly in the afternoon sun. A flagged path led to the green door, between flower beds sweet with primroses and scarlet tulips.

"My dream come true!" said Wistaria as she paused on the threshold to flash a smile of delight at her companion.

The door was locked, but a back window gave entrance to Claude, who in due course admitted Wistaria, and together they went over the premises. The rooms were low-ceiled but fairly spacious, there were roomy window-seats, and fireplaces crying out for log fires. They lingered longest in the sitting-room, which looked on a scrap of orchard where pink and white fruit blossom would soon run riot among the green.

"By the time I am ready for it someone is sure to snap it up," sighed Wistaria pensively as they prepared to depart. "I can't possibly do it for another year yet, and it's such a duck of a cottage, too."

"It is," Claude assented warmly as he helped her into the car and they started homewards.

The drive home was rather a silent one. Wistaria gave herself up to enjoyment of the glorious sunset, while Claude's mind was busy with an idea suggested to him by the girl's eager admiration of the cottage they had just left. She could not take it for a year, and in a year it would probably be tenanted; a few months would very likely see him back with his regiment, but meanwhile he wanted a quiet haven, and Maple Cottage would just suit him. What was to prevent his taking it and furnishing it for his own present use and letting it at a nominal rent to Wistaria when he returned to duty?

Claude did not attempt to hide from himself the fact that in securing the cottage he was taking thought as much for Wistaria as for himself. He had always found her charming, but her new mood of spontaneous gaiety, her keen appreciation of the country he himself held so dear, showed her in a fresh and even more enchanting light. There were depths in her of which he had never dreamt; he had wakened her from cool aloofness, had to a certain extent roused the latent woman in her—he realised that the key to her final awakening lay in his hands, that her full blossoming would be for the man who loved her, and that he loved her with all his heart and soul. Nevertheless, he hardly realised his own feelings until, meeting Guy Hunter that evening at The Imperial, the saturnine theatrical manager accosted him with:

"How about that little girl you took in

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

hand, Carruthers? Remember, I'm counting on her for *The Girl of Yesterday*. Don't want to hurry you, but I've set my heart on seeing her as 'Lavender.' She'll look the part to perfection, and play it, too, if only she wakes up. Had any luck yet?"

"Yes." Claude was surprised at the resentment his friend's words roused in him; he had almost forgotten that it was in response to Hunter's suggestion that he had undertaken the awakening of Wistaria. And now her awakening had begun the thought that it was for the benefit of a gaping public revolted his soul; her beauty had flowered for him; manlike, he longed to keep it for himself alone.

"Miss Wayne is a wonderful girl," he said quietly. "I think there'll be some news for you before long," and with that the great manager had to be content.

A week later Claude had interviewed the landlord, had taken Maple Cottage for twelve months, and set painters to work for its beautification. The next few days he spent acquiring furniture—simple,

A peal of laughter fell upon his ears, and he turned to see Wistaria, her feet bare, her skirt gathered about her, ankle-deep in the brook.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

inexpensive fumed oak and restful cushioned chairs that suited the cottage as more pretentious things could never have done. Unconsciously he found himself studying Wistaria's taste in his purchases—the blue hangings for the sitting-room, the rosebud chintz for the bedroom curtains, the brass candlesticks, and willow-pattern china were her suggestions, and consequently sacred.

During these days of late spring he saw rather less of Wistaria, making business an excuse for his many secret excursions to the little Surrey village. The girl was busy, too—the revue was going into a second edition, and there were new songs and dances to be rehearsed—but when they did meet there was about her an indefinable radiance, a suppressed excitement that set him wondering.

He was thinking of her on the sweet June morning which saw him winding between the tangled green hedges *en route* for Maple Cottage to superintend the arrival of the furniture. It was a golden day, bright and very peaceful; peace dwelt in his heart, too, and for the first time he dared to hope that after all the cottage might be an abiding place not for himself alone, but for Wistaria also, that when he took up his military duties again—as soon he must—he might leave her there installed in security as his wife.

His lean, brown face was set in lines of happy serenity as he stepped into the tiny hall and made for the sitting-room. He opened the door and paused on the threshold, amazement and consternation leaping to his deep-set grey eyes, for, kneeling on the floor, tape-measure in hand, was Wistaria!

"Mercy me!" The girl sat back on her knees and regarded him with astonishment. "So I'm caught after all, and I did want it to be a secret."

"A secret?" Claude looked at her with amused admiration as she rose and pushed back a rebellious wave of hair from her forehead.

"Yes. You see, an old aunt who has always had a liking for me has just died and left me some money—only a very little, but it's enough to enable me to take the cottage. I went to see the landlord, but he's out, so I came back to look round and take measurements. He's had it done up beautifully, so he must want to let it. I was keeping it for a surprise. I was going to get it all ready, and then ask you to motor me down and spring a surprise tea on you. And now you've caught me red-handed."

"I'm so sorry." For once in his life Claude was at a loss. She was so evidently enraptured at the thought of having the cottage, at the chance of her dream coming true, that he had not the heart to disillusion her. A hazy idea of going to the landlord and waiving his claim shot into his brain simultaneously with another solution which would involve sacrifice on the part of neither, since it would make the cottage a joint possession.

In fancy he saw her, a slim, straight figure in hyacinth blue linen, queening it over the peaceful, sunlit rooms, flitting among the roses on the tree-bordered lawn. The picture enchanted him, and while he dallied with it a big motor-van paused at the gate, and the tramp of feet sounded on the path.

Wistaria turned at the sound, and even as he went to the door Claude knew that the game was up, for already articles draped in sacking were making their appearance from the depths of the van. If Wistaria had needed enlightenment the van-man supplied it.

"Van-load of furniture. Name of Carruthers, Maple Cottage," he observed in strident tones.

Claude assented mechanically, and left him to superintend matters while he returned to Wistaria. She was sitting by the window, her face a little pale, her hands gripping the edge of the window-seat as though for support.

"So you were first in the field after all?" She tried to smile, a pitiful attempt that wrung Claude's heart. "I wish you'd told me. I'm glad it's you and nobody else, but I *had* set my heart on it, and——"

"You shall have it!" Claude strode to her side and took her hands in his. "Only don't cry, Wistaria, you poor disappointed little soul."

"Do you think I should take it from you?" Wistaria's chin tilted proudly, though there were tears in her brown eyes. "I'm not so mean as that, only I had looked forward to it so—it's such a duck of a place—and I've got the dinkiest rose and white chintz for the bedroom and a blue and amber rug for this room—and I know I'm a little fool, but I don't mind giving it up to you."

"You're not a little fool, and you're not going to give it up." Claude's tone was quietly resolute. "You're going to marry me, and share it."

Wistaria slipped to her feet, her hands still in his, her eyes shining with a rapt and wonderful happiness. And as Claude drew her to him and tilted her face to his he knew that Wistaria was fully awake at last.

* * * * *

"That girl's a perfect marvel!" said Guy Hunter when, a week later, he sat once more beside Claude in the stalls watching *Cut Along!* "She was a beautiful statue before, now she's alive and glowing with womanhood. I don't know how you've done it, my boy; but I'm confoundedly obliged to you. She'll

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Kneeling on the floor, tape-measure in hand, was Wistaria! "Mercy me!" the girl sat back on her knees and regarded him with astonishment. "So I'm caught after all, and I did want it to be a secret."

make a hit as 'Lavender.' I'll see her after the performance."

"I don't think I should bother if I were you," returned Claude quietly. "I believe Miss Wayne's got another engagement. It's a country one, but it's absolutely permanent, and——"

"You don't mean you've stolen a march on me!" The twinkle in Claude's grey eyes gave the clue to the sharp-witted manager.

"I'm afraid I do. You see, her heart isn't on the stage—it's wrapped up in a cottage, in blue china and rosebud chintz, and all the precious home things the dearest women love. I woke her up for you—and then I found I wanted her myself."

"And, bless my soul, I'm not surprised!" said Hunter, as his quizzical eyes intercepted the smile of sheer adoration which Wistaria wafted across to her soldier lover.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Story of Jonathan Rust

by "Taffrail"

Jonathan Rust was one of the many men to whom the war has given a chance to redeem a dubious past. In the following story the famous author of "Carry On!" and "Stand By!" describes in his inimitable way how the man who was forced to resign from the Navy lived up to the most glorious naval traditions when the chance came to serve his country.

I.

When in 1897 Jonathan Rust, in all the glory of a brand-new uniform and brass buttons, first joined the old *Britannia* as a naval cadet he was a small, curly-haired youngster of fourteen. I remember him well. I remember his cherub face and unusually shrill voice, and recollect how, with our usual fondness for nicknames, we immediately christened him the "Pip-Squeak." It described him exactly.

Jonathan had no mother, but I met his father for the first time in the hotel at Dartmouth where parents used occasionally to foregather when they came down in the summer term to visit their *Britannia* sons. The "Pip-Squeak," a term-mate and a boon companion of mine in those days, asked me to tea at the hotel with his father and himself, and I, nothing loth to accept hospitality at somebody else's expense, jumped at the offer. And a very satisfactory tea it was. I more than upheld my reputation in the manner in which I disposed of Devonshire cream, strawberry jam, cake, boiled eggs, sardines, and potted meat, and so did the "Pip-Squeak." We both occasioned his father a certain amount of mild surprise. Indeed, several times during the meal I noticed him gazing at us inquiringly through his spectacles as if he expected the pair of us to burst.

Jonathan's father was the placid, white-haired vicar of some country parish in Surrey, albeit with his huge frame, red face, and hearty voice he looked more like a successful gentleman farmer than a parson. Appalled as he may have been at our gluttony, he took an overwhelming pride and interest in his only child. He idolised him, and well I remember his taking me aside after our terrific meal and asking me what I thought of Jonathan, if he was popular with the other cadets, and if his officers and instructors thought well of him. I, well pleased with the world in general, neglected to inform the reverend gentleman that his son and I had lately been in disgrace for borrowing unripe cider-apples from an orchard. Nor did I tell him of the occasion when the "Pip-Squeak" and I trespassed in a strictly preserved covert in search of game with my derringer pistol, price 5s. 6d. We got no game, but a keeper got us, and we were both duly arraigned for our misdeeds and had to pay the penalty.

No. I drew a discreet veil over these episodes. I said that Jonathan was everything that a son should be, and mentioned that he was the apple of "Holy Joe's" eye—"Holy Joe," by the same token, being the ship's chaplain. And indeed the "Pip-Squeak" was rather a favourite in local ecclesiastical circles. He had a profound knowledge of the Scriptures, and his accurate treble voice made him a valuable acquisition to the choir in chapel on Sundays. But even this could not altogether condone his placing a large drawing-pin, point upwards, on the stool occupied during the sermon by our short-sighted and very unpopular organist. How we hated that organist, poor man!

No. I gave Jonathan a very good character, which I still believe he deserved, whereat his proud parent beamed benignly, fumbled in his pocket, and presented me with two half-crowns. I had not said what I had with this end in view, but five shillings were five shillings.

The next and last time I saw the "Pip-Squeak's" parent was at the end of our final

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

term before we went to sea. Jonathan, I remember, had done very well in his examinations and had passed out a midshipman, while I, lower down on the list, had still another four months to serve at sea before attaining the coveted white patches of a full-blown "snotty." Moreover, the "Pip-Squeak" had managed to win three prizes, for navigation, French, and drawing, while I had none at all. I shall never forget the look of pride on his father's face when Jonathan came down from the daïs with his pair of binoculars, a leather writing-case, and a case of instruments. And when the name of Cadet Jonathan Rust, who had passed into the *Britannia* 54th and passed out 10th, was read out in the examiner's report as a shining example to the more junior cadets, the old gentleman became positively beside himself with joy, and banged the blushing Jonathan on the back until he was begged to desist.

When we were finally sent to our first sea-going ships I found myself in a battleship in the Channel Squadron, while the "Pip-Squeak" went to a cruiser in the Mediterranean. So for a time I saw nothing of him, and it was not until three-and-a-half years later that, as Acting-Sub-Lieutenants, we foregathered at the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, where we were in the same classes for our navigation and pilotage courses.

But what a change those three-and-a-half years had wrought in Jonathan. He was no longer an angel, but a great husky fellow of nearly six feet, broad in proportion, and with a voice like a bull. He was still clever when he liked, but the habit of work seemed to have left him, and he was subject to alternate fits of the wildest hilarity and the deepest depression. I did not realise at first what had come over him, but I soon discovered. He had acquired a habit of lifting his elbow. His disposition, too, had changed for the worse on account of the other failing, so much so that he deliberately cut himself off from his former companions. Those of us who had known him and liked him in the past all tried to make a friend of him. But we were one and all given the cold shoulder. He merely spurned our advances and went his own way.

Of the scrapes and escapades which he indulged in at this period I need not speak, but when we had finally completed our courses, scraped through our examination, and were sent to sea once more as Sub-Lieutenants, he was appointed to a battleship at home while I went out to China.

It was about a year later that the final crash came, for then, on turning over the pages of a new Navy List, I suddenly came across the name of Sub-Lieutenant Jonathan Rust. It appeared in a special column of its own at the end of the book, with, opposite to it, the terse remark, "*Resigned to avoid trial by Court-Martial.*" Not until some time afterwards did I hear that certain mess funds of which he had been in charge had been found to be missing, and that the combined influences of drink and a woman of the wrong kind were responsible for his downfall. His father paid the money, but the shock of his son's disgrace nearly broke his heart. Jonathan himself married the woman and disappeared.

What really became of him I never discovered. His name used frequently to crop up in the course of conversation in the ward-rooms of His Majesty's ships, as the names of those who have died or have left the Service always will. Time after time I spoke to people who had met someone else who had either seen Jonathan in the flesh or had first-hand news of him. But never once did I come across a soul who had actually spoken to him, while all the second-hand stories, circumstantial though they were, differed. Moreover, the tale was a different one every time the name of Jonathan Rust was mentioned.

At any rate, it would seem that the ex-Sub-Lieutenant had become a nomad, a species of human derelict drifting round the world with no definite object in view except to keep body and soul together. At one period he was said to be serving as a deck-hand in a lumbering Western Ocean collier; next, I heard he was cattle ranching in the Argentine and making a very good thing of it. Then successive yarns filtered through the Navy to the effect that he was a trooper in the Mounted Police on the North-West frontier of Canada, the proprietor of a quayside eating-house in Capetown, and an actor in a touring theatrical company. Other folk were equally certain that he was living in more or less disreputable circumstances at Singapore or Zanzibar. He might just as well have been a general in the Guatemalan army or driving a taxicab in the streets of London. One never knew what to believe.

To tell the truth, those of us who had known Jonathan in the old *Britannia* days still had a sort of sneaking affection for him. We hated to think that a man who had once been a companion of ours might be living in a state of poverty in some God-forsaken part of the world with nobody to hold out a helping hand, and there was hardly one of his old term-mates who would not have assisted him if it had been in his power to do so. Several of us even tried to follow up the elusive and unsatisfactory clues as to his whereabouts, but our well-meant efforts were always hopelessly unsuccessful.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

II.

April, 1915, found me in command of H.M.S. *Splasher* on the Euphrates River. The gallant man-o'-war I was serving in was no super-Dreadnought, and I very much doubt if her name ever appeared in any official Navy list, though it is true that we added something to her dignity by religiously calling her a "gunboat" and by using the prefix "H.M.S." on every possible occasion. She was merely a small and rather ancient stern-wheel steamer, a glorified steam-launch, which we had borrowed, or "commandeered," if you prefer it, from her rightful owners when we started to wage war against the perfidious Turk in Mesopotamia.

She steamed about six knots and drew a trifle over two feet of water, and in the ordinary piping times of peace used to ply her noisy way up and down the upper, shallow reaches of the Euphrates, laden with merchandise and a choice assortment of chattering, odoriferous passengers from the seaport of Basra.

She was not beautiful to look at, certainly, for her lines were unsightly, while she had a stumpy funnel, an ugly, bulbous hull, and an enormous paddle-wheel abaft all. But by the time we had provided her with a couple of 3-pounder quickfirers and a ·303-inch Maxim; had manned her with one officer and six bluejackets, together with certain "compulsory volunteers" in the shape of three natives to do the stoking in the boiler-room; improvised a little extemporary protection against hostile rifle fire with sandbags and boiler-plating; hoisted the White Ensign and pendant; and last, but not least, had christened her the *Splasher*, we were tolerably proud of her.

We painted her regular man-o'-war grey to start with. When that peeled off we slapped on any other colour we could beg, borrow, or steal, or else allowed her to get along as best she could with no paint at all and a simple covering of dried river mud.

We had quite an exciting and interesting time, for, with several other craft like ourselves, April, 1915, found us operating against the Turkish lines of communication during their final attempt to retake Basra. I must apologise for breaking into geography, but they used to send their shallow draught *dhows* with men and stores down a tributary of the Euphrates stretching between Suk-e-Sheyukh and Basra, a distance of about seventy miles, to their advanced base just twenty miles from Basra itself. It was in this twenty miles of water that we had sufficient thrills to last us for a lifetime.

I call the stretch of water a "tributary" for want of a better word, for, throughout the greater portion of its length, it was anything but a river. It was really a tract of flooded country with an average depth of thirty-six inches or so, and accustomed as we were to our charts and other facilities at sea, the navigation difficulties were appalling.

We were in constant danger of running ashore, and very frequently did. More often than not, moreover, we took the ground under the very noses of Turks concealed a few yards away on *terra-firma*, and they, probably chuckling with glee when it was a case of all hands and the cook leaping overboard to push the old *Splasher* off her muddy bed, opened up a heavy rifle fire to add to our discomfiture. We did our best to keep down their fire with our 3-pounders and the Maxim, but they generally managed to give us a tolerably hot time before we got the old hooker afloat again.

Almost every day we were in action, either in chasing and endeavouring to destroy the hostile sailing *dhows*, or with our Turkish friends and their Arab irregulars, snugly ensconced on dry land. We did not have the success we wished for in destroying the *dhows*, for their crews, well up in the local navigation, generally got wind of our approach, and manœuvred their craft into shallow water where we could not get at them, but I think we occasionally gave the enemy's riflemen something to write home about.

One evening, just after sundown, we were merrily splashing our way down stream towards the anchorage where we generally lay for the night out of range of the Turkish snipers and field-guns. It had, I remember, been a particularly hot, exhausting, and busy day, while the mosquitoes and the enemy's riflemen had been more than usually aggressive. Towards the end of the afternoon we, the *Splasher*, had been left behind to deal with some Turkish field-guns concealed in a palm grove, which were causing some annoyance to our troops further down the river. The guns were difficult to locate, but we managed to spot their flash, and some twenty high explosive shells at a range of about 2,800 yards had made things very unpleasant, so much so, in fact, that they departed with some haste to a more salubrious locality.

We were consequently alone in all our glory, but a couple of miles further on, at a spot about a mile on the wrong side of our trenches, our helm jammed, and we ran ashore on a mud-bank within fifty feet of the shore. It was no ordinary grounding, either, for the old *Splasher*, going at her utmost speed, ran up on to the mud until

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Arab . . . stepped forward, let the loose *burnous* slide off his shoulders, and turned round. . . . "Thus, thus, and thus did the thrice-cursed Turkish dogs treat me!" he said in Arabic, his eyes gleaming revengefully. [*Page 66, col. 2.*]

her bows were well out of water, and she lay there wallowing like a hippopotamus.

It was rapidly getting dark, and adopting our usual procedure we went overboard to a man and tried to shove her off—her old paddle-wheel going full speed astern the whole time, and covering us with mud and water. But not one inch would she budge. Then we tried lightening her by transferring stores to our one small dinghy, and, with the paddle still thrashing the water, getting all hands aft, and jumping together at the word

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

of command to try and jerk her bows free. Not a bit of it. She merely see-sawed up and down, and remained stuck as fast as any limpet.

It was a pretty sort of predicament to be in, for, though the Turks did not seem to have noticed our difficulty up to the present, they could hardly fail to do so sooner or later. Then, with a couple of field-guns and a company of riflemen on the shore, our life would not be worth living.

A quarter-of-an-hour later it was almost dark, and I was still racking my brains to think of some method of getting the old ship free, when O'Hara, my Petty Officer, whispered hoarsely in my ear.

"Mister Vawdrey, sir," he wheezed—he always had a voice like an asthmatic corn-crake—"Mister Vawdrey, sir! There's one o' them there Harab blokes in a nightshirt a' comin' down from them there palm trees. Shall I plug 'im one?"

I looked up at once, and there, picking his way slowly towards us over the mud from a fringe of palms about thirty yards from the water's edge, was a tall figure in a white *burnous*.

The warlike O'Hara, meanwhile, always keen on battle and sudden death, lifted his rifle and slipped a cartridge into the breech.

"Don't fire!" I muttered, straining my eyes in the dim light, and noticing that the Arab appeared to be unarmed. "He seems peaceable."

"I don't trust 'em, sir," murmured the Petty Officer, his rifle at his shoulder. "Them Harab blokes ain't no better'n——." He could think of no suitable simile on the spur of the moment, and his voice died away in a growl.

"Take your finger off the trigger, anyhow!" I cautioned him. He grinned and obeyed reluctantly.

The Arab still came on until at last he halted at the water's edge opposite to where we lay, and examined us closely.

"Ask him what he wants," I told our native interpreter, who was busy shivering with fright at the thought of what the Turks might do to him if we were captured.

A conversation ensued.

"Him say friend," our man explained at last. "Him say one big Turkish camp 'bout one, two miles behind dere," pointing to the palm grove. "Him say, he lika come on board talka to you."

O'Hara greeted the information with an incredulous grunt.

"Tell him to hold his hands over his head and to wade out," I said, scenting treachery. "If he attempts to draw a weapon he'll be shot."

The message was passed, and with both hands well in the air our mysterious visitor waded out, and was unceremoniously dragged on board over the bows. He was unusually tall for an Arab, but seemed thin and gaunt for want of proper nourishment.

"Ask him," I said, "who he is and what he wants."

"Him say friend," answered the interpreter nervously, after a lengthy conversation. "Him say ship run ashore an' bimeby Turk come find an' shoot Engleesh an' bun ship. Him say Turk him no savvy ship here now, but bimeby find an' mak plenty *tamasha*."

"Yes, but has he come to help us?" I demanded.

"Ah—he," nodded our linguist. "Him say short way"—he pointed up the river—"him savvy *mahela** hide in creek. Him say 'spose Engleesh get *mahela* can pull ship into water."

There certainly were possibilities in the scheme if the *mahela* was actually hidden in the reeds, but what guarantee had I that the Arab was telling the truth? How was I to know that he had not been sent by the enemy to lead us into a trap to facilitate the capture of the *Splasher*?

"Why does he come to help us?" I asked.

"Him say he no lika dem Turk," answered the interpreter with a wry face.

"Why does he dislike them?"

The Arab, in spite of the dim light, evidently saw I was doubtful, for before the interpreter had time to repeat my question he stepped forward, let the loose *burnous* slide off his shoulders, and turned round. The sight nearly made me sick. His once white back was a horrid expanse of torn, lacerated flesh, evidently the result of a recent severe flogging. He held out his right hand, showing the recently-healed scar of a knife-wound right through the palm. He touched his right ear, or the place where his ear should have been—it was missing!

"Thus, thus, and thus did the thrice-cursed Turkish dogs treat me!" he said in Arabic, his eyes gleaming revengefully.

I needed no further proof that the man was a genuine friend.

III.

I need hardly enter into details as to how, guided by our Arab, we found the *mahela* concealed in the reeds barely a quarter-of-a-mile from where the *Splasher* lay on her mud bank, but find her we did. She was a tubby, shallow-draught vessel laden with stores for the Turkish troops, and her Arab

* *Mahela* = a light-draught river *dhow*.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

crew, seizing time by the forelock, had considerately gone ashore to celebrate the occasion with their friends in a neighbouring village.

We merely seized their craft without the least difficulty, poled her out into the stream, anchored her with her hempen cable about a hundred feet upstream of the stranded *Splasher*, and passed a hawser between the two vessels. The current was swift, and our idea, simplicity itself, was to cut the *dhow's* cable and to allow her to drift down past the *Splasher*, gathering momentum as she went. Then, when she came to the end of her tether, the sudden jerk on the hawser would either pull us free or snap the connecting rope like a piece of pack-thread.

It was quite conceivable that the hawser would part and leave us still high and dry while the *mahela* floated gaily off down stream, but it was a bad business altogether, and desperate situations require desperate remedies. I had no wish to find myself crucified on a palm tree in front of some Arab village, which was what might happen to us if we were made prisoners. Neither had O'Hara or any of the others.

As a matter of fact everything worked beautifully, and it was not until just after we had finished passing the hawser that some prowling Turks ashore spotted us for the first time, and opened fire with rifles at a range of about fifty yards. We replied with the Maxim and the 3-pounders, but the dark shore presently became outlined in sparkling flashes, and the bullets came "*phew-w phew-w*" all round us. I could hear them whistling through the air in every direction, thudding into the sandbags and woodwork and clanging like rivetters' hammers as they hit our boiler-plate protection. Our poor old funnel, too, inelegant at the best of times, came out of the business looking like a huge nutmeg-grater.

However, by dint of superhuman efforts on the part of our Arab friend and two blue-jackets in the dinghy, the hawser was passed. We turned up with our end on board the *Splasher*, and then, in the light of the gun flashes, I saw the bright gleam of the Arab's axe as he chopped away at the *dhow's* cable. The bullets must have been whistling all round him, for he was in full view of the enemy.

It seemed an eternity before he cut through it, but, at last, in the darkness and the drifting smoke, I heard a yell and caught a sudden glimpse of the *mahela* whirling down stream, while the dinghy, with the three men in her, was pulling for all she was worth towards us. She just got back in time, and, tumbling up out of the boat, the two seamen dragged the native on board after them.

The enemy's fire redoubled in its fury while our Maxim made the night hideous with its infernal "*Ra-ta-ta-ta-ta*. One could hardly hear oneself speak, but we were past caring for that. Our eyes were fixed on the *mahela*, and the one question which lay at the bottom of our minds was whether or not the hawser would hold.

The *mahela* swung past our stern at what, to my distorted imagination, seemed a speed of about twenty knots.

"It'll carry away!" I heard myself shouting. "The damned thing'll carry away!" While O'Hara at the wheel beside me, imperturbable as ever, grunted and growled unintelligibly.

The next thing I remember was a sudden jerk which nearly flung me off my feet, while the *Splasher*, still fast to the *dhow* and spinning like a tee-to-tum, joined her on her mad career down stream.

We were afloat!

It took us some time to get our old hooker under control again and to chop the *mahela* free. Moreover, the Turks were still pouring in a heavy fire, but we managed it somehow.

Then we proceeded to do a full-power trial down the river to get out of range. Our safety valve lifted, the boiler nearly burst, the funnel vomited smoke and flame from its many perforations, and our native firemen down below drove the old stern wheel until it splashed louder and revolved faster than it ever had before. But we made good progress, and eventually, after rounding a bend, the firing ceased.

We were safe.

Then it was that Leading-Seaman Jennings, who had been one of the men on board the *dhow*, came up and made his report.

"Beg pardon, sir," he said, wiping the sweat off his face, "I takes th' liberty o' hignitin' that 'ere junk before we skips outa 'er." He pointed up the river to where the *mahela*, spluttering redly, like an incipient Brock's benefit, had drifted ashore.

"Good work!" said I, very pleased. "You did the right thing, Jennings. Any casualties?"

"Yessir. Able Seaman Baxter's copped it through 'is leg an' shoulder. Murphy's got 'it through the arm, an' that there Ramsammi bloke, 'im what talks th' lingo" —he meant our interpreter—"is 'owlin' something dreadful. But 'e ain't got a scratch on 'im, sir!"

I, very relieved in my mind to think that we had come off so lightly, laughed.

"Yessir," the seaman went on. "Neither of our men is reely desprit, but that there Harab wot come aboard 'as copped it fair

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

crool. 'It through the chest, sir, an' coughin' up blood, pints of it!" (Jennings had all the bluejacket's love of gory detail.)

"Well, do the best you can for him," I told him. "I'll come down and have a look at him as soon as I can." I was the *Splasher's* ex-officio doctor as well as her skipper.

An hour later, when we were safely at anchor and had made a signal for a doctor to come and attend to our wounded, I went below to see them. Baxter and Murphy, swathed in amateur bandages, were both smoking cigarettes and chatting merrily to each other, but the Arab, lying back on a mattress, seemed in a very bad way.

I went over to him, whereupon he opened his eyes and smiled wanly. "I'm afraid I'm done in," he whispered huskily in good English.

I started in astonishment. "Aren't you a native?"

He smiled again and shook his head ever so slightly.

"No. I'm as British as you are. Bend a little closer and I'll tell you. I can only whisper.

"I came to this country ten years ago," he went on. "When war broke out I was running a coffee business near Baghdad. The Turks started rounding up all Europeans. I knew Arabic well, so disguised myself like this and made my way down country to join our people. You see," he added, "I thought I should be useful as I knew the country well.

"I got as far as Suk-e-Sheyukh without much difficulty, but there the Turks smelt a rat and got hold of me. They tortured me and flogged me, but I escaped. Yes, I escaped. Thank God!"

"Poor chap!" I murmured sympathetically. "But how did you come across us?"

"I was hiding in the reeds the whole day and saw the crew of the *mahela* leave her. Then your steamboat ran ashore, and when it got fairly dark I came to tell you. You see," he said, "I was in the Navy once."

"You were in the Navy!" I gasped in my astonishment.

He nodded feebly. "My name," he said, "is Jonathan Rust."

He had not recognised me with my beard. I cannot remember how I thanked him or what I said. I think I must have wept.

He died late that night, and his last requests were that a letter should be written to his father, and that, if possible, he should be given a naval funeral.

We buried him with naval honours the next day. The Last Post was sounded and the three volleys were fired over his grave, and if anybody deserved reinstatement in the Service or his posthumous Victoria Cross it was Jonathan Rust.

(Another splendid naval sketch by "Taffrail" will appear next month.)

THE COMING OF A DREAM.

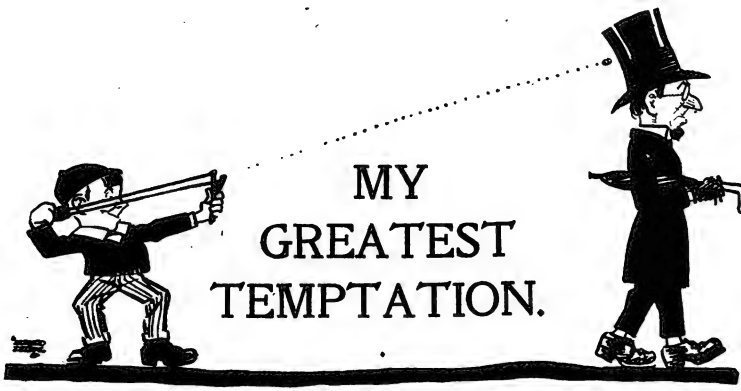
When the war first broke upon us, like a bolt from out the blue,
Loud she heard the bugles calling, and their message thrilled her through.
She was quite obsessed by khaki, and she dreamt as maidens do,
Of a bold swashbuckling lover, something over six-foot-two.

He should be at least a Captain, with a jingling sword and spur,
Who could quell perspiring "Tommies" with a single eyelash stir;
And upon the field of battle none should be as brave as he,
Till he got in all the papers with a dearly-bought V.C.

Oh, she found her soldier-lover, and she wedded him with pride,
For he wore a small bronze medal when he kissed his blushing bride;
Yet he's got no sword to jingle—spurs would not be *comme il faut*,
For—alas for maiden dreaming!—he's a Bantam N.C.O.!

Anne Page.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



MY GREATEST TEMPTATION.

Mr. Alfred Leete has great sympathy with the small boy who is tempted to test the efficiency of his catapult by aiming at a harmless citizen's top hat.

By Lesbia Robinson.

Cravings That Cause Commotion, Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

Temptation, like the measles, is a thing to which we are all prone. Even the most godly and law-abiding citizens have their little weaknesses; they may not yearn to rifle the Bank of England or strangle a post-office official, but they may be afflicted with an overpowering desire to eat sweets in church or pull the pigtail of an adjacent flapper. The big temptations pass the average person by—indulgence in murder or shop-lifting is apt to produce unpleasant consequences—it is the little temptations that so frequently encompass one, and cause even the most strong-minded to fall.

There are a few self-righteous souls who contrive to hide their petty weaknesses, who never display undue desire to lick the jam-spoon or pull the tail of an unoffending cat. They are not, as a rule, popular people—one feels that a little human frailty would endear them to us considerably, and would, like the sherry in the trifle, give them a welcome piquancy.

Now that economy is the order of the day and we are obliged to subdue the lusts of the flesh, temptations assail us on every hand. Chocolates, cigars, and pretty garments seduce us to our undoing, while those unfortunate beings who combine a healthy appetite with a hard-working conscience have to resist the pangs of hunger every meal-time, lest haply they consume more than their allowance of bread or other restricted commodities.

Then there are what for want of a better term I may call "conversational temptations." Mrs. Scatterbrain may inform you she has it on good authority that a German invasion on the East Coast is expected on Friday. "It's absolutely official, my dear—my washerwoman's husband knows a man who's wife is a charlady at the Admiralty, so it *must* be

"Renewing his Youth"—the sight of youngsters playing ball always inspires Mr. Thomas Henry with the desire to join in.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Prompted by benevolent motives Mr. Cottington Taylor frequently yearns to supply chest-protectors and woollen hose to thinly clad damsels.

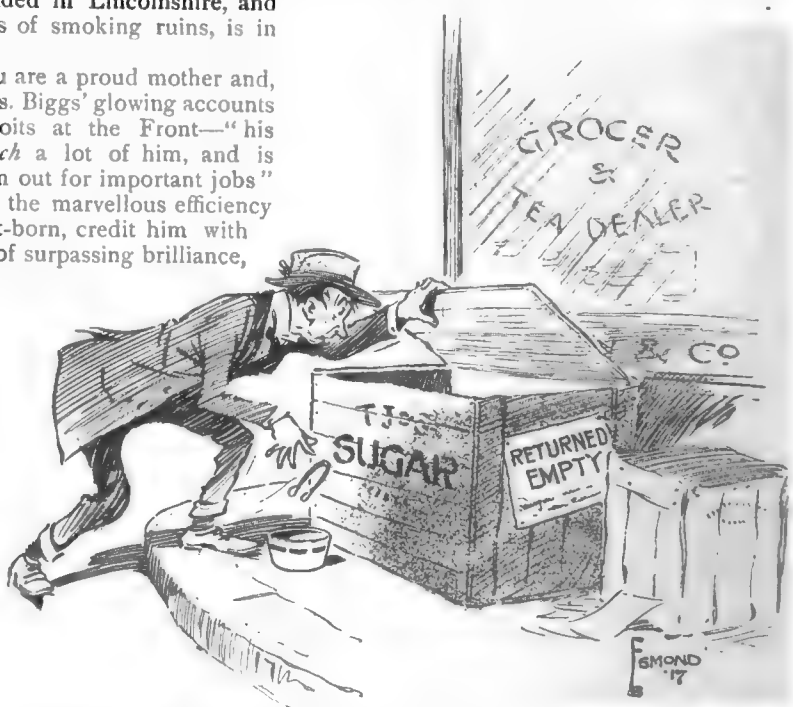
true!" Unless you are one of the strong, silent kind, you probably pass on the news—in confidence!—with the result that by the end of the day a report that ten thousand Germans have landed in Lincolnshire, and Grimsby is a mass of smoking ruins, is in active circulation.

Or, perhaps, you are a proud mother and, tired of hearing Mrs. Biggs' glowing accounts of her son's exploits at the Front—"his Colonel thinks *such* a lot of him, and is always singling him out for important jobs"—you expatiate on the marvellous efficiency of Fred, your first-born, credit him with a musketry record of surpassing brilliance, and describe airily how a Brigadier-General and untold Colonels have implored him to accept a commission. All of which makes it very awkward for that young gentleman when he returns home on leave with one stripe, and not the faintest prospect of exchanging it for a star.

Some people's temptations are of a more militant order—they long to interfere, to tell you just how your business or household should be run, what kind of oatmeal you should use for porridge, and the best way to clean your brass fire-irons. The end of it is that you too are smitten with temptation—the temptation to be startlingly uncivil, and so put an end to the intercourse before you commit murder.

These are the everyday and more or less natural temptations to which almost anyone is liable, but there are others, undreamt of and unexpected, to which the most unlikely people will occasionally plead guilty. Perhaps it is a sedate old lady of seventy who longs to bowl a hoop, or a mild and kindly old gentleman who can never see a baby's pram outside a shop without yearning to give it a surreptitious push—there are some very estimable folks, who even in their declining years, are beset by temptations of this sort.

Temptations may be either active or passive—if you yearn to fling a boot at an obnoxious street musician, that is an active temptation; if you are tempted to wink at Mary Ann's barefaced overstepping of her meat allowance you succumb to one of the passive variety. Lydia Gibbs' was certainly one of the active kind, for although



"Drawing a Blank"—Esmond confesses to a temptation to acquire sugar by unlawful means, which are not always successful.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

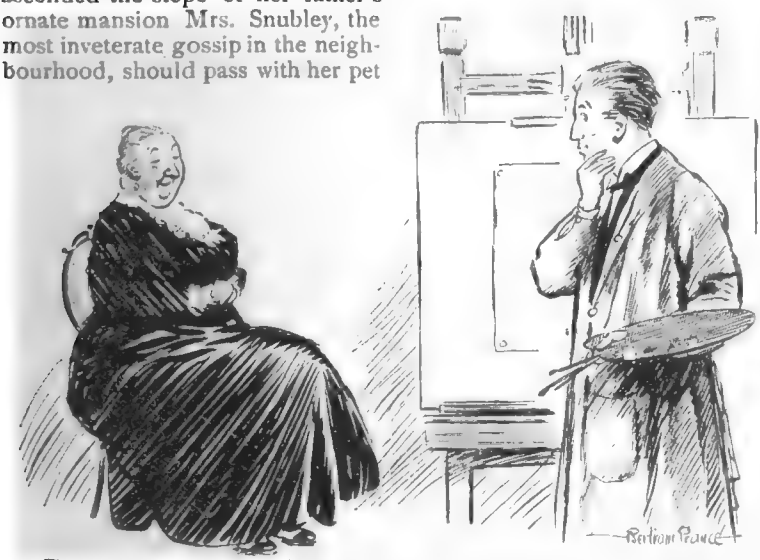
she dwelt among the marble halls of Mayfair, her chief ambition was to go shopping with a string bag and buy things off barrows.

The war gave her an excuse, for finding a soldier's widow whom she had taken under her wing struggling with incipient bronchitis, she volunteered to go forth and do the week-end shopping for her and her three lusty youngsters. An outraged chauffeur drove her to the outskirts of Soho, recommending the street market there as one out of which there was a slender chance she might emerge with her life, and Lydia, tall, fair and twenty-two, plunged into the midst of the great unwashed with a sense of adventure.

The cheapness of things amazed her, and even the sum the widow had entrusted to her began to have possibilities amid the astounding bargains in rabbits, oranges, and bloaters that faced her on every hand. The string bag was soon full to overflowing, and, as paper was at a discount, presented to the passer-by an unsightly medley of onions, greens, and obtrusively red butcher's meat.

Mr. Reg. F. Smith owns to a weakness for eating sweets in church, and this in spite of the fact that the advent of the collection plate may mean detection.

All would have been well had not Lydia, confused by the babel of sounds and the jostling crowd, lost her way, and, having searched fruitlessly for the car, decided, as a suitable climax, to return home by 'bus. It was the irony of fate that even as she ascended the steps of her father's ornate mansion Mrs. Snubley, the most inveterate gossip in the neighbourhood, should pass with her pet Pekingese. In desperation, Lydia tried vainly to smuggle the bag out of sight, and in so doing dropped a jar of jam, which rolling merrily down the steps caught the Pekingese broadside on and felled him to the ground, where he lay in a bed of greengage jam and broken china. In vain Lydia offered her apologies and strove to repair the damage to Fido's coat with a wisp of a handkerchief. Mrs. Snubley continued to lament until a handsome staff officer bore down upon the scene and offered assistance. Mrs. Snubley was but human, and she succumbed speedily to the charm of the Army.



The temptation to depict as she really is the homely lady who insists on having her portrait painted is one to which Mr. Bertram Prance finds it hard not to succumb.

Lydia, facing the young officer across the ruins, could do nothing but laugh. Captain Charteris decided it was the nicest laugh in the world — and the wedding-dress is to be of net over white satin!

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

French to the Fingertips

By Gina Palerme

Most women are flattered if you suggest that they have imparted a French touch to their clothes, for Frenchwomen have a style entirely their own—a style seldom achieved by Englishwomen. The secret of her countrywomen's elusive charm is discussed in the following article by Mdlle. Gina Palerme, the beautiful French actress.

Photos E. O. Hoppe and Malcolm Arbuthnot

The beauty of the Frenchwoman is a studied beauty, but her excellence in dress is unstudied, for it is second nature to a Frenchwoman to wear her clothes as though they grew upon her.

We have a saying in France, "It jumps to the eyes"—at least, that is the literal translation. The true meaning is that a certain thing is quite obvious, quite clear, quite noticeable—express it how you will!

And when I was asked to write something about that popular phrase, "French to the fingertips," it struck me so quickly that a Frenchwoman is always unmistakable for some strange reason. She "jumps to the eyes" in a remarkable way. You say to yourself, "that woman is French!"—and you are right, without doubt, unless by chance she is Russian, for the subjects of the Czar have caught some qualities from us in clothes and coiffure.

I cannot explain it, but there it is, a fact there is no denying. Just something in the tilt of a hat, or the swing of a skirt. Just

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

something in a poise of the head or the way a veil is swathed. Just something in the line of a dress or the glance of an eye. What it is I cannot define. But it is there all the time, a "*je ne sais quoi*" that stamps every daughter of France, be she peasant or aristocrat.

Now a Frenchwoman dresses well, without effort, just because it is second nature to her to put on her clothes as though they grew on her skin, not as though a clever modiste had said: "Madame, behold the latest mode. I must insist that you wear it!"

Since I have been in England I have studied much, and I do not think that the fresh, clear beauty of a true English girl can be equalled or improved anywhere. We are more artificial in face and hair treatment in my country, but in clothes I think we beat you. For example, I have seen a Frenchwoman wearing the very latest "cry" in dress from a Parisian house, and have also seen an Englishwoman in the same dress—made by the same firm—and failed to recognise it! You follow and adopt our fashions, English ladies, but after crossing the Channel they are not the same somehow!

Once I heard a very famous artist speaking

There is an indefinable "something" about the appearance of a Frenchwoman, born of her skill in combining simplicity with smartness——

We have a style of beauty, a style of dress quite apart from English types. For our beauty is more studied, while our excellence in dress is more *un*studied than yours. A Frenchwoman looks well-dressed in any clothes. But when an Englishwoman strives to dress well she always shows it, when her toilette is complete. "This is excellent," she seems to say. "It meant a lot of work, but the result is good, *n'est-ce pas?*"

Photos E. O. Hoppé and Malcolm Arbuthnot.

——an art which Mdlle. Gina Palerme herself possesses in common with her charming countrywomen.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

of a Frenchwoman say: "Give her a plain skirt, a shawl, and a good hair-brush, and she'll turn herself into a charming and presentable individual."

That is true, I think. Among the working girls of Paris and other French towns there is an amazing smartness of a very simple kind. And, really, the art of combining smartness with simplicity shows the highest form of skill in the female sex. A Frenchwoman has such a happy knack of dealing with her hair. She brushes it so well to start with, and the average Frenchwoman of any walk in life knows that she can be attractive with a *chic* head and a trim figure, and does not spend hard-earned money on cheap clothes and fripperies, which merely look common and bad style, and are far from becoming.

I have always marvelled at the difference between working-girls in France and England. Across the Channel marked simplicity, with a certain inevitable smartness, is ever noticeable. But over here I think that working-girls try to imitate the styles worn by wealthy women—and come to grief in the effort. It is far better to be neat and smart than to wear cheap, gaudy clothes that strive to ape expensive modes, and at the best are only poor imitations of the real thing.

War-time France is a serious place for women, and the once pleasure-loving, idle Parisienne is now a saddened, ever-busy woman, doing what she can for her country and its fighting-men. But she remains, still, French to the fingertips, though she wears a nurse's uniform or a munition-maker's overall.

You see, to be *chic* is an instinct with us. That fascinating word cannot be translated or defined; it means, though, a certain inborn quality that leads a woman to make the very best of herself, that renders a plain woman attractive and a pretty one still more charming. Perhaps it is due to our climate, which is certainly better than the English climate; perhaps to our mode of life; perhaps to our language. Anyhow, there it is! We are French to the fingertips because we cannot help ourselves. It would be a great effort for us to be anything else. And I am very proud that it is so.

Every woman can cultivate the French touch—that little, almost negligible "something" that just makes all the difference! Do you know what I mean? Put on your simple serge dress with as much care as though it were a gown of cloth of gold. Arrange your inexpensive hat with the fascinating tilt that redeems it from the commonplace. See that your gloves are right, that your shoes and stockings are suitable, that your hair is *bien coiffé*, your hat arranged at a becoming angle, and then you will surely deserve that much-desired label, Parisienne!

Photo *E. O. Hoppé.*

The Frenchwoman has such a happy knack of dealing with her hair, and whatever style she adopts has always a latent distinction about it.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THREE GOLDEN DAYS

A struggle with a kit-bag and a handshake with the boys,
A tramp through mud and misery, confusion, fog, and noise;
A bath, some stew, new tegger, and a scramble for the train,
And a rush across the Channel, and—it's Blighty once again!

The old express for London, and a paper and a smoke,
The same old dingy station where you dodge and cough and choke;
A drink, a tip, a taxi, and a scurry through the rain,
And a thunder on the knocker, and—it's home, sweet home again.

A smacking kiss from Mabel and a softer one from Ma,
A bear-like hug from Billie and an awful grip from Pa;
A squeeze from Auntie Isabel, a grin from Uncle Fred,
Another bath, a splendid feed, a fag, a joke, and bed.

The garden in the morning and a *matinée* at three,
A dinner at the Ritz with Joan (she's just the girl for me!),
Two ripping stalls at Daly's, an arrival home at four,
And wake at twelve to find the pater breaking in the door.

A ramble in the country in a motor after lunch,
A topping tea with Gladys (she's the best girl of the bunch!),
A scamper back to London and an extra fine revue,
A supper at the Carlton with a bill that turns you blue.

A rather rousing breakfast and a five-pun-note from Dad,
A busy, dizzy morning in the shops with Joan and Glad.,
A wedding and a whist drive and a ball-room and a dance,
And a kiss from Joan and Gladys while I've got the beastly chance.

An icy bath at seven and some coffee and a cab,
A minute's wait for Mabel while she gives her face a dab,
A hustle to the station, and a weight is off my chest,
For I'm whirling back to Flanders, and a dug-out—and a *rest!*

Dudley Nichols.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A Touch of Paint

By C. RANDOLPH LICHFIELD.

"And he that stands upon a slippery place,
Makes nice of no vile hold to stay him up."

For some time Garth's deep voice had rumbled across his desk into the attentive ears of the fair-haired young woman who sat taking down his words.

Occasionally he had paused briefly to pick up a fresh letter, and once or twice he had lifted his dark, thoughtful eyes to her face with a look of brooding admiration.

But now, as he sat with his arms resting on his knees and his hands playing idly in the knee-hole of his desk, he paused so long that the girl's agile pencil came to rest, and his eyes lifted to her face with a puzzled look which changed swiftly to one of amazement and alarm. The colour flushed up into his face, then faded, leaving him singularly pale.

"That'll do, Miss James," he said, controlling himself by an effort. "That'll be all now."

When she had left the room, Garth waited a moment, then rising, went quietly and locked the door after her. Next he locked the door leading into the passage. Returning to the desk with quickening excitement, he pulled back his chair, and bending almost double, looked into the knee-hole of the desk and up at the object his idly playing hands had discovered a few minutes before.

"I thought so," he gasped, and flung away in a sort of panic, his purpled face glistening with sudden sweat; "a dictaphone —an Ajax Improved, too! Who——"

His thoughts failed him for the moment. Wiping the sweat from his face with a trembling hand, he walked unsteadily across the room and leant heavily upon a cupboard.

"And I thought I had been so wary—safeguarded myself in every way," he whispered. "But it's clear enough I'm suspected. When was it fixed, I wonder? To think I've *sat* there—sat there!"

With hushed movements he returned to the desk, and going down on one knee he found the cord of the dictaphone fastened to the side of the knee-hole by drawing-pins. At the floor it was threaded through a small cut in the carpet. He traced it under the carpet to the window and saw that it went straight up the wall in the angle of the window-frame. It was red, and so much the colour of the distempered wall as to be scarcely visible. He had to get upon a chair before he could be sure it passed through a neatly-drilled hole in the angle of the ceiling into the office above his own.

"No fool fixed that," he muttered thickly as he stepped down. "It might have been there for weeks and I'd never have noticed it! It must have been fixed when the office was closed. It's the Secret Service people, sure enough.

"If I'd some idea what they know! If they merely suspect—— They may know I've been working contraband and that wouldn't matter so greatly. But it isn't that; they've got a pretty shrewd idea what I've been doing. Oh, I've been a fool. Supposing they know everything and I can't escape! Given time, I think I could! Neuburg! Say they suspect my dealings with him and the others! How do I stand? That's the question. I must have some idea what my danger is before I decide what risks I can run."

Controlling himself with an effort, he quietly

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

left the room by the passage door, and shutting it behind him made for the stairs leading to the floor above. A softly-whistling office-boy was the only person he met, but as he reached the upper floor and glanced along the gloomy passage on his right, he caught sight of a man's leg and foot disappearing behind the closing door of the room over his own office.

There was only one suite of offices let on that floor, he knew, and that was some distance along the passage on his left.

He turned down the right-hand passage and, treading as silently as he could, approached the door he had just seen closed.

He could see nothing through the keyhole, but he could hear suppressed voices—men's voices.

Very steadily he took hold of the door-handle and turned it. It did not make a sound. He was ready with a pretext for his presence if it had betrayed him. But the handle gave forth no sound, nor the door, as he cautiously pushed it slightly open. So he opened it a trifle wider and peeped into the unfurnished room.

Over by the window, with his back to the door, his head bent, his hands in his overcoat pockets, stood a tall, square-shouldered man. With his hat pushed to the back of his head he was looking down and talking in a subdued voice to a man sprawling on a short strip of shabby stair-carpet at his feet.

The sprawling man, lying on his stomach and resting on his left forearm, with stockinged feet stretched towards the door, wore neither overcoat nor hat, but in the place of the latter a light metal cap with ear-pieces, which he had pushed off his ears. On the floor in front of him was a small polished-wood box with leather handle, and under his right hand, in which he held a pencil, lay a writing-pad.

Choking a little, Garth took in the significance of everything at a glance, and turned his ear to catch what was being said.

". . . miss anything?"

"Nothing to miss," said the man on the floor in a grumbling undertone. "I don't know what he's doing now; he's alone—mere business routine, I expect. He's been dictating correspondence to Miss Curtice for some time, so I've had nothing to do, since she hands in everything that comes within her ken. I merely have to record what's said when she isn't present. But, truthfully, I don't see the reason of all this; why can't we lag him and get on to something fresh?"

"Oh, Mr. Kemsley explained that to me this morning," rejoined the other man, and, moving a foot very quietly, lowered himself to rest on one knee. "In particular, we've got to get the fellow who was in there the other day when Panton was up here. We don't know him, and guessing's not good enough; we've got to be sure who he is. Miss Curtice can't be sure, and the best she could do was to put in a list of fifteen or sixteen names as 'possibles.' We're going to make a clean sweep of this nest of spies; not a fledgeling is to escape, whether neutral like this Garth or naturalised, and the impression is that next to Garth—without whom they couldn't carry on effectually—this unknown must be the most dangerous. He seems to supply most of the information, for we know all the others, and can't see how they could possibly acquire the more important information Garth transmits."

"I see," murmured the man on the floor. "But is there no danger that while we're delaying they may take alarm and give us the slip? Bearing in mind that a certain U-boat popped up and landed men in Ireland, it wouldn't be impossible for another to pop up off the coast of Cornwall or Wales, we'll say, and pick up a friendly little party who put off by appointment in a small boat."

"Not impossible. That isn't your province, of course, so you can't know, but we've got a string to each one of them, except this unknown, and where they go we follow. If, say, three or four of them should get into a small boat, as you suggest, there'd be three or four of us there to pull them out again.

"But I mustn't talk or you may miss something important listening to me. I merely looked in as I came by to see if you were set up all right. You know what to do if anybody comes in below who you think ought to be followed. Put your cap on. I'll just use your telephone to speak to my wife; then I'll go. It'll be a test of how quickly 'Change' puts you through. They've had orders that any call from you must go through instantly."

With bated breath Garth waited till he heard the same man's voice speaking at the telephone; then he gingerly closed the door and crept away.

He stole back to his own room and, sinking trembling into a chair, covered his eyes with his hand, trying to shut out the awful prospect of the sudden and ignominious death that is the fate of detected spies in time of war.

He was a big, strong man in the prime of life, and came of a long line of Swedish seamen, though his mother was of Bavarian origin, and he had never before known fear. But now, suddenly awakened to the peril of

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

his position, he was utterly unnerved. After a few minutes, however, he got up and, going to a cupboard, mixed a strong drink, which he partly gulped while he stood, then carried to his desk, where he sat down, his face in his hands.

There was no doubt in his mind that he had been under suspicion for some time. His typist had been in his employ seven or eight weeks, and she was clearly the "Miss Curtice" the man upstairs had referred to. Even supposing the Secret Service had only just begun to suspect him when his advertisement in the Press for a lady typist gave them an opportunity to settle her in his office through the shorthand and typewriting agency upon whose recommendation he had engaged her, he must have been under observation for nearly two months.

How much had been discovered about him in that period—how much, indeed, had actually happened? It could only be presumed that the Secret Service people knew enough to put him on trial for his life!—all of them, perhaps, except Neuburg. Only because they wanted Neuburg and could not yet identify him were they holding their hand. And any day they might discover him; any day or hour of the day he might walk into the office with his self-assured air, perfectly unconscious of the danger!

Impulsively Garth pulled the telephone towards him. Then, suddenly remembering the dictaphone and drawing back, he got up. Trembling still, he emptied the tumbler and turned away to the fireplace.

"I must get away," he muttered, rubbing his face. "No good waiting. Others must look after themselves. But I must have a definite plan. If we're all being closely watched wherever we go, what's to be done? Somehow, I can't think in here now I know about that infernal thing, and I daren't cut it off. I'll step out for a breath of air. That'll help to steady me, and I may get an idea whether I'm being closely followed."

He put on his hat and coat hurriedly and turned to go. But on second thoughts he wheeled back to his desk and, unlocking a drawer, took out a well-filled pocket-book and stuffed it into a pocket. As he did so, he saw the ugly muzzle of an automatic pistol sticking out from under some papers, and his eyes lit with angry excitement.

He took the pistol, fitted a clip of cartridges into it, and dropped it into a pocket of his coat.

"I'm going out," he announced as he passed through the other room. "I shan't be long."

Miss James glanced round from her place in the far corner, and their eyes met for an instant. He wondered what she was thinking, but her expression was inscrutable. He gave her a nod and a slight smile, since he had tried to be nice to her all along. She was far more attractive than the two other girls who had joined his depleted staff.

As he wheeled out on to the landing he almost collided with a painter who was passing; in fact, the paint-brush the man held in his hand touched the knee of Garth's trousers and left a slight smear.

"Aw, beg y'r pardin'," said the man in a full-mouthed tone, and caught up a corner of his grimy overall-jacket to brush the smear away.

"No, no! Leave it, confound you!" Garth protested. "Only make it worse!"

"Better not let it dry. Come 'long passage, Number 7. Drop'r turps'll fetch it orf."

"No, never mind now," muttered Garth, starting down the stairs.

"Well, as yer loike! Though I'm sorry. Quite accidental."

Garth was in no state of mind to worry over such trifles. He was possessed by a horrible feeling of being encompassed, surrounded, hemmed in, and felt he must get into the open air to escape.

But as he advanced along the entrance hall towards the street he slackened his steps, and, coming to a stop in the wide doorway, took out his watch.

Letting his head hang a little, as if he were absently considering a problem of time, he looked across and up and down the street from under his eyelids, searching around for anyone loitering. He saw two men he could have fancied were watching him, and swiftly taking note of their appearance he pocketed his watch, descended the steps, and turned up the street in a westerly direction.

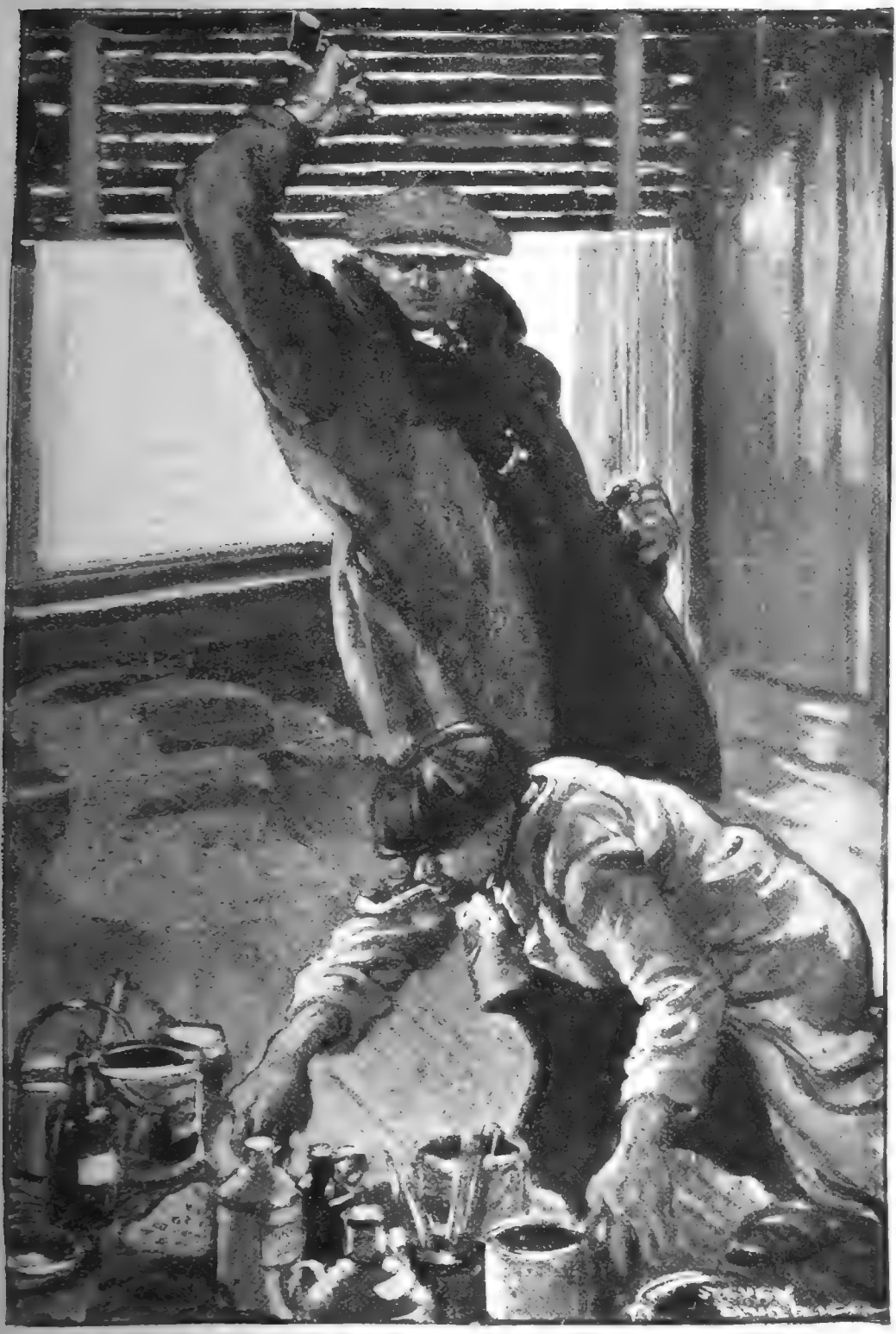
He went along at a brisk rate for a couple of hundred yards, then turned sharply down a side street and stepped into a tobacconist's shop, where he bought a cigar.

Without stopping to light it, he wheeled out again and turned back. Neither of the men he had suspected had followed him as far as he could tell, but he recognised a very commonplace-looking man gazing into the corner shop window as having passed him while he stood on the steps of the office building, when the man had been going in the opposite direction to that in which he had come now.

Garth stood there to light his cigar, and he allowed match after match to go out in the wind while he furtively studied the man's demeanour.

At length the stranger drew back out of sight, apparently attracted by something in

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



As he bent to reach a small can in the corner, Garth dealt him a sudden, heavy blow on the back of his head with his automatic pistol. [See page 201.]

Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

the window he had passed, and, starting forward at once, Garth was just in time to see him take off his hat and brush back his thin hair.

Garth turned up the street, walking away from the office for some little distance; then, turning to cross the road, but pausing on account of the traffic, he glanced back.

There was no sign of the man who had taken off his hat to brush his hair, but coming along the pavement with a preoccupied air was one of the two men Garth had suspected when he started out. He assumed that he was being systematically shadowed, that the very commonplace-looking man had followed him till he thought he might have been noticed, when he took off his hat as a signal to this other man to take up the pursuit.

Garth crossed the road. He stumbled a little in stepping on to the opposite pavement. It filled him with terror to suppose he might be followed wherever he went—back to his bachelor's flat, out to dine, to the theatre or a friend's, home again, and to the office in the morning.

Could he shake off pursuit now?

He dropped his cigar and boarded an omnibus going west.

At Cheapside he alighted and entered a hatter's to have his hat ironed. He did not want it ironed, but he wanted that human warren, the Mansion House Subway. When he issued from the hatter's he could not see his pursuer, perhaps because he was half afraid to look for him.

He mingled with a little crowd of men at the end of Cheapside, and, screened by them to some extent, ran down into the subway. He did not look back nor pause to consider which way he should go, but allowed the swirling tide of men to decide for him; and so he found himself in Throgmorton Street.

There he encountered a man with whom he sometimes lunched, and while they stood talking Garth, glancing about him, espied not far off the commonplace-looking man who had taken off his hat and brushed his hair back. He was standing reading a wide-open newspaper, and his back was turned to Garth. But under his left-hand thumb and pressed against the paper he held a little disc. Garth would not have noticed it but that it suddenly caught the fading sunlight and glistened like a miniature mirror.

"Well, I can't stay to talk now," said Garth, breaking away from his gabbling acquaintance. "I'm pushed for time—most unmercifully. See you to-morrow, perhaps."

He went straight back to the office, never troubling to glance back. He was fully assured he would be followed. He foresaw he would have to be very, very wide awake if he was to escape with his life. Meantime he had to carry on as usual, as if he did not suspect he was under observation.

As he entered the office Stanton, the spectacled, senior clerk, swung round on his stool and slipped down.

"Mr. Neuburg is in your room, sir," he said alertly. "He hasn't been waiting long."

It was such a blow that Garth almost winced. Involuntarily he glanced at Miss James, but to his exquisite relief she appeared quite unconcerned.

He nodded to Stanton and threw open the door of his room. As he pushed the door to behind him he put up his free hand in a tragic gesture of warning and looked scowlingly into the slumberous eyes of the elderly man who rose from a chair to greet him.

"Sorry I was out! Sorry to keep you waiting!" he exclaimed, infusing into his voice what cheerfulness of tone he could command, and, advancing quickly, he clapped a hand over the other's mouth and pressed him back into his seat. "I won't keep you a minute. Just let me make a note or two upon a matter which may otherwise slip my memory."

Still scowling warningly into his startled visitor's face, he snatched a pencil and a slip of paper. Swiftly he scrawled a few words to explain the situation, and as Neuburg took it and commenced to read, he started talking about imaginary business. When the other raised alarm-filled eyes to his face he pointed to the knee-hole of his desk and up the wall to the ceiling, but still went on talking, reasoning, deriding, arguing, till Neuburg sensed his wishes and began talking business too.

As soon as he deemed it wise, Garth signed to him to go.

Neuburg rose, and, still talking business, they moved towards the door. Then Neuburg grasped him by the arm.

"What's to be done?" he whispered.

"Nothing at present," Garth answered, shaking his head and scowling. "Dine at the Troc. about eight. Will see you there and explain."

"All right, then," said Neuburg aloud, and, somewhat relieved, opened the door. "I'll try to see them both for you between this and to-morrow afternoon. Sorry you're so rushed."

"Good-bye," said Garth, speaking more gruffly than he intended, and shut the door.

Raging inwardly at the mischance which brought Neuburg to the office, he threw himself into a chair and dropped his pale, convulsed face into his hands.

["A TOUCH OF PAINT" continued overleaf.]

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

He realised it was imperative he should get away at once if he were to escape. Any such attempt would have a better chance of succeeding while the Secret Service people had no reason to suppose he would make it, and before they felt satisfied that Neuburg was the man they particularly wanted.

He had no intention of meeting Neuburg, of doing anything which would not enhance his own chance to escape.

He remembered a Dutch steamer that was waiting for the morning tide at Blackwall. She had cargo of his aboard, and he knew her berth exactly. He knew her Captain personally—a simple, honest man, but with a large family and financial troubles which rendered him susceptible to the temptation of a substantial bribe.

"If I could get a small boat and slip down stream I could find her in the dark," he muttered. "Jan Hoost would hide me at a price. The question is how to get there without being followed?"

He sat for some time thinking excitedly. Then suddenly he sprang to his feet, seeing a possible way out in the mischance which had caused a touch of paint to show upon the knee of his trousers.

Making an effort to compose himself, he went to the door of the other room.

"Stanton," he said, then with a smile, "no, I mean Miss James, I have to go out again. If I don't get back before you want to leave, just put the correspondence on my desk, will you? Then I can attend to it. Lock this outer door as usual, Stanton. I'll take the key of the other in case you are all gone."

Thus he hoped to obviate any idea that he had bolted arising before office hours next morning, by which time, if all went well, he would be safely out at sea.

Turning back into his room he closed the door, and, going to a cupboard, took out a hat-case, exchanging his silk hat for an old golf cap; then, stepping quietly out into the passage, he locked the door and took the key.

He was breathing rather heavily and his pulses were racing, for he knew that the next few minutes would decide everything if he were to fail.

He crossed the dusky landing swiftly, quietly, and went along the gloomy passage to the vacant offices, Number 7, where the painter who had damaged his trousers was methodically putting away his pots and brushes for the night.

"Say you've got a little turpentine?" he asked, pushing the door to. "And a piece of rag? Let's see if we can get this paint off."

"Eh?" mumbled the man, glancing up at him. "Better've tried it at once."

As he bent to reach a small can in the corner, Garth dealt him a sudden, heavy blow on the back of his head with his automatic pistol. He did not much care whether he killed him or not; his object was to knock him insensible before he could cry out. In that he was quite successful.

In two minutes he had the man bound hand and foot with the stay-cords of his step-ladder and gagged with his own neckerchief. In under five minutes Garth had contrived to alter his appearance considerably, smeared his face over with a little dust from the floor, and, clad in the painter's bedaubed overalls, with a pot of paint and brushes in one hand, he slipped an arm through a short step-ladder and passed out into the passage, puffing evil-smelling shag in the painter's stubby pipe.

There was nobody in sight, but as he paused to shut and lock the door he heard a door on the landing opened, and, casting a nervous look that way, he saw Miss James issue from his office, glancing towards him, then down the other passage.

His heart stood still, and, bending his head lower, he watched her from under the peak of his cap.

She went a couple of steps down the stairs and leant over the banisters, peering down, then drew back and looked up to the floor above.

It seemed to him she was wondering what had become of him—that she had watched from her window, and not seeing him leave the building had had her curiosity aroused.

He was in a terrible position while she remained on the landing. Dark though it was growing, he did not dare face her there, for while his disguise might enable him to pass watchers in the street, she, who knew him so much better than they and was aware that he had left the office, might recognise him readily. And his purpose in adopting such a disguise would be apparent to her. He realised, too, that as she must have seen him he could not remain, locking and unlocking the door, much longer.

All at once, after glancing down the well of the staircase again, she stepped aside and disappeared from his view by turning up the first flight of stairs to the floor above.

Unspeakably relieved, Garth hitched the step-ladder on to his shoulder, and moved quietly forward.

But he had acted a moment too soon, for when he reached the landing the girl was still upon the second flight of stairs, and as he glanced up involuntarily she glanced down.

For the instant he could not imagine

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

whe her she recognised him or not, and nerving himself not to show any agitation, he turned down the stairs to the hall.

The sound of moving feet told him she had stepped back a stair or two to take a second look at him, and he puffed a cloud of rank smoke, hoping her suspicion might be overcome by so powerful a suggestion that he was simply what he appeared to be, and not a man who had a nice taste in tobacco.

It seemed to for the moment, but as he reached the hall he heard her quick step running down a little way.

Fear was almost choking him, and as he passed out into the street, wheeling to the left and glancing back askance, and saw her running down the stairs, he found it hard to restrain himself from throwing paint-pot and step ladder down and bolting for the nearest corner. But he set his teeth, and started to gain the first turning as calmly as he could.

He gained it, and wheeled into a short and narrow street with high office buildings on either side. He strode unhindered into the first doorway, and turned down a passage mysteriously dark. There he quickly set down his encumbrances, and began tearing off the white overalls which made him a conspicuous figure in the street. They fitted tightly over his own clothes, and he was straining at their last grip upon him when hurried feet came into the doorway, and a man's figure swung into view before him.

Garth leapt at him, caught him by the throat with savage hands, flung him down in the passage, and sped into the street all in one moment, and next moment he was in another street—a busy street where pavements were thronged and motor vehicles of all kinds roared and blared their ways in converse streams.

Garth leapt upon the first omnibus, and was pushed off, for it was crowded. He sprang upon the next, and forced himself inside. That, too, was crowded, and he was told to get off. But he argued with the conductor long enough to gain his object of being carried for a hundred yards faster than anyone could run in so thronged a thoroughfare; then he stepped off and made away along another street. Thus riding short distances in thoroughfares where omnibuses ran, and cutting down side-streets where he could hurry on foot, he baffled pursuit; and at length turned into a small barber's shop in the Clerkenwell district, demanding a quick shave and hair-cut and a wash, saying he had had a mishap with a spirit-lamp which had almost blown his head off.

Ten o'clock found him in the Mile End Road. By that time his appearance had undergone a further change. He had discarded his overcoat, collar and cuffs, and over his waistcoat he was wearing a seaman's jersey which he had bought at a second-hand clothier's. Being most anxious not to evoke curiosity which might engender any suspicion about him, he went to another dealer's for a reefer and peaked cap, and he changed his clothes in dark places, throwing his own things away where they would not be quickly found.

His face, too, was altered so much that when he saw himself in a shop-window mirror he scarcely recognised it. Grime collected on his fingers by touching things he passed and rubbed thinly around his restless, anxious eyes and thickly upon his chin, gave him a hungry, neglected look quite unlike that one associates with the idea of a prosperous City man.

A light, chilly rain was falling when he ventured to make his way to the river in search of a boat, and he had to be careful where he looked, for any trouble with night-watchmen or river-side police would almost certainly snatch success from his grasp. But after about an hour he found himself on the flight of steps leading down to the river's edge, and he was able to make out through the eerie gloom the outline of a broad-beamed boat riding gently at the side of a lighter he thought he could reach by a leap.

But he was some time before he could resolve to make that leap in the dark. Yet only when he had made it did he appreciate how perilous it was. By the narrowest possible margin he made it, however, and though badly shaken, he went quickly round the lighter and slid down into the boat.

His not unreasonable fear that she would have no oars aboard was falsified, and casting her off, he pushed out on to the tide.

Paddling quietly, and keeping as much as possible in the shadows, and looking ahead constantly, he rowed cautiously down the river. It was a journey full of danger to him, yet strangely devoid of incidents, and at length he descried against the dark night-sky the irregular roof-line of the tall warehouse off which the vessel he sought lay waiting for the tide.

With very little difficulty he found her, for he knew her lines well. He experienced considerably more trouble in climbing aboard her, but after strenuous labour he found himself upon her deck, exhausted, breathless, but triumphant.

While he sat getting back his strength a soft-footed figure loomed up near at hand. He got up before addressing the man, who swung round upon him in a startled way as he spoke, asking for the Captain by name.

[*"A TOUCH OF PAINT" continued overleaf.*]

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE FINISHING TOUCH!

THE DRESSMAKER may gown you to perfection, yet the ultimate triumph of her art depends upon the finishing touch which Ven-Yusa alone is able to give to the complexion.

Therefore, give your skin day by day the benefit of an oxygen bath as provided by the Ven-Yusa treatment. This will promote its clearness and beauty.

To preserve the complexion from the strain of long hours and nervous exhaustion, a jar of Ven-Yusa is always a welcome boon.

VEN-YUSA
The Oxygen Face Cream

1/- per jar at Chemists, Stores, Hairdressers, &c., or by post from C. E. Fulford, Ltd., Leeds. Depots & Agencies at Sydney, Cape Town, Calcutta, Bombay, Colombo, etc.

Digitized by Google XL Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Capt. M——, B.E.F., France, writes:
"Your Soles are absolutely O.K."

Sir H. H. A. HOARE, Bart., writes:
"They are in every way thoroughly satisfactory."

Phillips' 'Military'
SOLES AND HEELS

Thin rubber plates, with raised studs, to be attached on top of ordinary soles and heels, giving complete protection from wear. The rubber used is **six times more durable than leather.**

They impart smoothness to the tread, give grip, and prevent slipping. Feet kept dry in wet weather. Ideal for Golf.

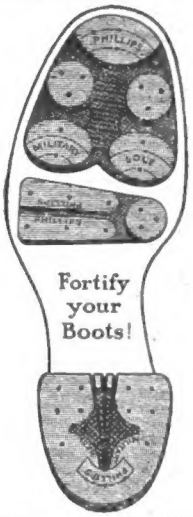
FROM ALL BOOTMAKERS.

STOUT (for Active Service)	**4/9** per set.
LIGHT (for Town Wear, Golf, etc.)	**3/9** ,,
LADIES' (for General Wear)	**3/-** ,,

With slight extra charge for fixing.

If any difficulty in obtaining, send pencilled outline of sole and heel, with P.O. for Sample Set, to the makers. Sent Post Free.

Phillips' Patents Ltd. (Dept. R 2), **142-6 Old Street, London, E.C.**



SULPHOLINE

This famous lotion quickly removes Skin Eruptions, ensuring a clear complexion. The slightest rash, faintest spot, irritable pimples, disfiguring blotches, obstinate eczema, disappear by applying SULPHOLINE, which renders the skin spotless, soft, clear, supple, comfortable. For 42 years it has been the remedy for

Eruptions	Roughness	Acne
Pimples	Rashes	Blotches
Redness	Eczema	Spots
Psoriasis	Scurf	Rosea

Sulpholine is prepared by the great Skin Specialists, J. PEPPER & CO. Ltd., 7 Bedford Laboratories, London, S.E., and is sold in bottles at 1/3 and 3/-. It can be obtained direct from them by post or from any Chemists and Stores throughout the world.

Quickly removes the effects of Sunscorch.

STUDY THE ADVERTISEMENTS AND WHEN WRITING TO ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION **The ROYAL MAGAZINE**

DON'T LOOK OLD!

But restore your grey and faded hairs to their natural colour with LOCKYER'S SULPHUR HAIR RESTORER

1/9 Sold Everywhere. 1/9

Lockyer's restores the natural colour, cleanses the scalp, and makes the most perfect Hair Dressing. Prepared by J. PEPPER & Co. Ltd., 7 Bedford Laboratories, London, S.E. Obtainable by post, or any Chemists or Stores throughout the World.

SHORTHAND

SLOAN-DUPLOYAN SYSTEM

("NEW RAPID" METHOD).

80 words per minute in **ONE MONTH** guaranteed. Handbook and Lesson free. SHORTHAND ASSOCIATION (only address), 55 Holborn Hall, London, W.C.

Established 35 Years.

Freemans
DISTINCTIVE
READY SOUPS

LADIES SUFFERING FROM ANÆMIA

SHOULD GIVE A TRIAL TO

Dr. HOMMEL'S HÆMATOGEN.

THE BEST REMEDY

Approved of by thousands of Doctors all over the World.

Almost immediate improvement in the condition of the blood. Palpitation of the heart, shortness of breath and all other symptoms of the disease soon disappear. Nerves and body strengthened. Unsurpassed in all cases of weakness.

AIDS DIGESTION AND PRODUCES A SOUND APPETITE.

A London Physician writes: "Anæmic patient in very low health and nearly given up, had tried all the recognised medicines without success. Four weeks' treatment with Dr. HOMMEL'S Hæmatogen made her look bright and quite a new woman.

Ask expressly for the genuine Dr. HOMMEL'S Hæmatogen. Sold by all Chemists.

Write for free booklet to **Dr. HOMMEL'S Hæmatogen, 36 St. Andrew's Hill, London, E.C.**

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

In scarcely intelligible Dutch-English he was gruffly given to understand that the Captain was ashore, and he himself had no business aboard. How did he come there?

Without wasting an attempt to deceive the sailor under such linguistic disadvantage, Garth bought permission to await the Captain's return.

The man left him and went forward. But after a little time, long enough for him to have looked at what Garth had given him in a good light, he returned and invited Garth to follow him below.

Garth followed him into a wretched little cabin containing two bunks.

"Me," said the sailor, pointing to the lower bunk, then indicating the upper, "you," he added invitingly.

Garth accepted the invitation gratefully, for he felt worn-out and chilled to the bone, and after helping him into the upper bunk, and saying something about telling the Captain he had understood Garth to say he had signed on, the sailor left him.

At first Garth did not feel uncomfortable; his sense of relief in being hidden aboard the vessel surpassed all other feelings. But as time went on, and his limbs began to ache with cramp, his mood changed. He could not stretch his legs; he had to lie with them drawn up so that his knees protruded over the edge of the bunk, and the blanket drawn over him was a noisome thing. From blessing his good fortune, he passed to cursing the ill-luck which had brought him to such a pass. He cursed the men who had led him into danger and the others who had driven him to take flight. Above all he cursed the spying girl, James.

He was nearly dozing when he thought he heard the Captain come aboard, and he decided to feign sleep on the chance that the sailor might not think to mention his presence, and he might thus avoid the single remaining danger of the Captain refusing his passage. So he drew the fusty blanket well over his head, leaving only a small space through which he could watch with one eye.

To add to his discomfort, he fell to thinking of a certain powerful vessel in whose loss he had been concerned. She had gone down with a hundred-and-seven souls. And he wondered—he imagined the horror of being out at sea in this reeking Dutch tub, and being suddenly flung out of his bunk, and seeing the side of the cabin burst into smoke and flame, and then—water, leaping, surging, whirling water and darkness!

As he forced his mind from the thought, footsteps sounded on the stairs, and his peeping eye saw three men enter the cabin. The first was a short, stout sailor, the second a squarely-built man in a mackintosh, whose masterful air alarmed him; the third was the very commonplace-looking man who had taken off his hat to brush back his hair.

Garth lay still and bated his breath in an agony of apprehension.

"He'll come, Poynter," averred the man in the mackintosh as he entered the cabin and looked round. "He would naturally make for this boat. Who's that up there?"

In broken English the sailor, evidently believing what he said, answered that the man in the upper bunk was one of the crew. He was sick.

"So should I be if I stayed long in here," retorted the man in the mackintosh, turning away.

Garth's still heart began to beat again. From under a fluttering eyelid he watched the very commonplace-looking man step aside from the doorway to allow the other, who seemed his superior, to pass out. In doing so he took a casual look up at the occupied bunk.

"Oh, wait a minute, Mr. Kemsley," he said, and catching his superior by the arm, pointed to Garth's protruding knees. "What about the smear of paint on the man's knee? An odd coincidence after what the painter told us!"

Garth threw off the blanket, and struggling for the pistol in his pocket, tried to get out of his bunk and to his feet to fight for his life. But he was stiff with cramp, and he could only spare one hand to help himself. His foot caught, and with a hoarse, passionate cry of rage he pitched head first at the feet of his captors.

WHY NOT A WOMEN'S PARLIAMENT?

Horatio Bottomley is always worth reading, and his article on page 8 is one of the most arresting he has ever written. The question is a vital one, and the author has done full justice to it.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Topics Grave and Gay.

VOTES FOR ACTRESSES!

No, this is not a Suffragette appeal under another name, but a little competition for soldiers and sailors. You see, it's like this. Every month pictures of pretty stage favourites adorn the first six or seven pages of the ROYAL. Everybody, save the crustiest old curmudgeons, loves a pretty girl, and the Army and Navy are especially appreciative in this direction. There is no lack of beauty for us to choose from—charming young actresses, unlike sugar, are still plentiful, but—it would take a volume the size of a London directory to portray all those with a claim to recognition.

This is where I want you who are fighting men to help me, for I am proud to believe that you look upon the ROYAL as a link between you and the pretty faces and frocks denied you, save when leave gives you a chance to taste once more the joys of the theatre.

WHO'S YOUR FAVOURITE?

Most of you have some special favourite among stage beauties, some charming actress to whom you do homage, and whom you would like to see immortalised in the ROYAL. I want each one of you to write and tell me the name of the favourite who holds first place in your heart. The votes received by each fair lady will be faithfully counted, and she who heads the poll will—if honeyed words can prevail—pose for a series of special photographs to appear in the ROYAL.

I want you also to give, quite shortly, the reasons for your choice. To the twelve men who "spot the winner" and give in addition the best reasons for their selection, I will send either a silver pencil-case or a pack of cards, as well as a copy of the ROYAL in which their favourite actress eventually appears.

All men of our fighting forces are eligible. Entries should be addressed to The Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. 2, and the envelopes marked "Footlights" in the top left-hand corner. They must reach this office not later than first post on Monday, June 18th.

ORDER YOUR "ROYAL" NOW!

Unless you do you will most certainly emulate old Mother Hubbard, and go to the bookstall only to find it bare—of ROYALS, at any rate. Then you would be terribly disappointed, and, more important still, so would the soldier—or is it a sailor?—to whom you pass on your copy. The shortage of paper is a serious matter, and I cannot urge you too strongly to order your copy in advance. If you all do this the newsagent will know exactly how many to order, we shall know how many to print, and nobody will be doomed to disappointment.

Apart from personal reasons are the patriotic ones which make ordering in advance absolutely imperative. I look to you all to be paper patriots and help us over the rough times ahead. We are doing our best to help you by supplying an order form on this page. All you have to do is to fill it up, hand it to your newsagent, and rest content in the knowledge that the ROYAL will be yours.

HAND THIS FORM TO YOUR NEWSAGENT.

ROYAL MAGAZINE ORDER FORM.

To .....
(Name of Newsagent)

Please reserve for me monthly, until further notice, a copy of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

Signature .....

Address .....

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY